Sayyed Mujtaba Musavi Lari

YOUTH AND MORALS

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FORE WORD

We have seen many a nation and person who apparently lived under certain conditions, yet we witnessed how selected individuals or groups among them excelled and took the lead in the field of civilization.
Among these groups are those who abandoned thinking and adopted the habit of blaming every event in their lives on “luck”. When these groups face any situation which requires them to reflect, they simply say: “It is our luck”, “Amazing how’ coincidences occur”, “Strange is this life, no one can violate its rules”!!
Yet if we take some time to reflect on this issue, we discover that neither luck nor coincidences are factors in causing failure; the most vita/factor which mainly causes failure is “ill manners”. Germany, for example, after WWII was nothing more than a handful of ashes and debris. Today Germany is one of the leading industrial nations. Experts credit this unprecedented advancement to the sense of responsibility and control which the Germans felt thereafter; not that they have better minds or are more creative than other nations. Thus, it is most accurate to say that the advancement of any nations, including material advancement, is reliant upon its good conduct and morality. This fact has been established throughout history, removing any doubt that social conduct is a factor in the future of civilizations.

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On the other hand we notice that the nature of a man depends on his characteristics and values. Therefore, man deserves the title of”humanitarian”for possessing such characteristics, without which he does not differ from animals.
The search for the highest human values should be done in the field of individual conduct. It is worthy to point out that achieving the highest human values can be done through educating the soul and training it to accept the assigned psychological and behavioral methods.
Hence, we find that sociologists and psychologists have made many detailed scientific studies on how to counter or prevent corruption and achieve good morals.
The scholars who are most knowledgeable and the best educators in this field are our Holy Imams. The Imams have set guidelines for us through their words, and their lives are examples for us to follow so that we may achieve moral excellence. These guidelines and examples give us the opportunity to live as happy humans beings who may enjoy excellent morals.

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This topic especially concerns the young, for they are more sensitive about these issues of life. Nevertheless, the There are many people who suffer from their ill natures, and can find no means to rid themselves of this quality.
books which have been written in this field, as ideological and practical guides for the young are scarce' and do not have the advantage of modern language skills. It is for this reason that we choose to produce a book for today's youth.
Fortunately, we have found the book at hard and have decided to publish it; this book, Youth and Morals: A Step Towards Eradicating Corruption deals with the analysis of various behavioral issues in a new' style, relying on Divine verses, prophetic narrations and tradit ion, from the Holy Imams (A. 5).
We urge you to thoroughly read this book and use it to counter and prevent social corruption.
The Organization for the Protection of Youth
Qum, Iran
The Winter of 1387 A.H.

INTRODUCTION

Every individual in this world endeavors to achieve "happiness" and "tranquility and struggles day and night to reach this dream in the fields of' life which appear like war arenas. He fights in this field willingly in most cases to sacrifice everything in order to witness the bird of happiness fly over his head so he may live beneath its shadow the rest of his life.
It is unfortunate to see many individuals possessing various talents which qualify them to lead a life of happiness and satisfaction subjected to different factors which make their souls a toy for discomfort and insecurity. As a result, these individuals fall victim to the untrue dream that living happily is nothing but mere fiction, and that man's inevitable conclusion is to become a straw being tossed around by the fictitious waves of pain ending up on the bottom of the grave of disillusion and poverty.
These pains and sufferings are not but the result of choosing false images over facts and realities. They have not followed that light of righteousness, nor have they resorted to a reliable segment on the path of life Surely the reflections of the images which are drawn in the minds of men in the sea of waves of anxieties and their lonely goals and unrealistic hopes are the factors to blame for bringing mankind out of light into darkness and making them subject to confusing hardships.
Man, who is the highest creature, is made of two distinguished powers, the spiritual power and the mechanical power. In addition to the material characteristics which he shares with animals, man has many spiritual needs, which If fulfilled give him a very great chance of reaching perfection. Whenever one of these two sides of man becomes more powerful than the other the late becomes weaker and hence is defeated.
In light of the just mentioned fact, it is worthy to notice that industry has truly changed the features of life. The industrial advancement, together with the puzzling changes in the various aspects of life have explained many ambiguous uncertainties, and solved countless difficult questions. Thus, many parts of the universe from the depth of the seas to the darkness of

space became fields for man’s journeys and discoveries. On the other hand, the spiritual needs of man became weakened; corruption appeared on the land and seas as a result of the crimes he committed in the numerous corners of life. The number of disasters and inhuman crimes has reached unbelielevels. The factors of salvation have become weak in front of the phenomenon of corruption and social disorder. The remains of spirituality are burning in the midst of the fires of lust, loneliness and filth

Today we clearly observe that material gains have taken priority over virtue. Man has equipped himself with the tools of industry and experimental sciences and has abandoned the good merits which are expected and needed to guard his soul from being destroyed under the feet of the evilness of lust and uncontrolled wants. Even human emotions are in a state of struggle between life and death.

Lying, stinginess, hypocrisy, oppression, selfishness and other lowly characteristics, all resembling an invincible dam blocking the stream of human happiness and perfection, have chained the hands of man and thrown him in the merciless waves of the ocean of relentless filth. The triumph of the knights, loneliness, individual pains, social disasters and various miseries in general, are the result of the fall of human virtues. Both Sociologists and psychologists attest to the fact that without excellent virtues and spiritual guidance man would wander from the path of justice which leads him to peak of greatness and perfection.

Individuals who excel in society and whose names are recorded in bold letters by history all enjoy some sort of pure and appreciated virtues. Societies which are not armed with the weapon of good manners are not ruled by worthy rules and do not, in fact, deserve to live as a human body. It is for this reason that the destruction of previous great civilizations did not take place because of political or economical crisis but from a bankruptcy of good manners.

Man-made legislation and systems are unable to penetrate the human soul nor can they guarantee constructive relationships between the different societies and nations the same way spiritual manners do. Manmade laws, which are manifestations of human ideas, are not qualified to bring authentic happiness to mankind, this is because men have a limited thinking capacity.

Thus, they cannot conceive all of the phenomena surrounding their lives. Moreover, even if man knows the depth of the phenomenon surrounding him he is always subjected to outside influences which prevent him from accepting the truth. In light of the above, we observe that man-made laws, change with time and their surrounding conditions. In fact, the appearance of corruption and miseries are not but the result of the shortcomings of such laws.

On the other hand, we have the sacred school of the prophets which is inspired by the magnificent springs of the lights of revelation and depends on unlimited Divine knowledge. Thus, these laws are not vulnerable to the tides of time, change, or transformation. Because of its comprehension of the realities of life and existence, the prophetic school offers humanity the most accurate system

for reaching perfection and moral excellence, and calls man to direct his soul to greatness. The positive and appreciated effects of faithfulness on man are undisputable, for it is clear that if man did not possess an internal motive to prevent him from making himself a victim of his lusts and unlimited wants, then any step he took towards, righteousness would mean certain failure. Hence, it is impossible to establish a safe and perfect human society, without

equipping the human members with morality and spirituality.
The basics on which the eternal Islamic faith was built by the greatest personality of all times, Prophet Muhammad (S.A. W), and which rely from the very first day on piety are those means of happiness that can bring comfort in this world and the hereafter.
In fact, the Islamic call was built on the bases which requires man to evaluate his spiritual value to the highest point by elevating the level of his beliefs to a chain of pure and praiseworthy values. Islam strictly prohibits man from sacrificing his excellent morals for the sake of his lusts and cravings. Islam stands in the face of those who dishonor humanity and fights them fiercely. So a society where in the individual and social ties are built on Islamic values enjoys tranquility, comfort and trust in all aspects. All its members enjoy equal rights, and observe the interpersonal relations set by the faith. Thus, giving other societies the opportunity to achieve the same, which is a perfect step towards a great civil revolution by mankind.

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In this book, we introduce some of the vital issues affecting man's social life and how Islam deals with them.
It is incumbent on me to mention here that a section of this book was previously published in the magazine The Islamic Ideology which is published in Persian in the holy city of Qum. I leave it to our honorable readers to judge the value of this book which has been praised by many scholars. I hope that we all advance in promoting ourselves on the path of the Islamic scholars, and by rescuing our souls from drowning in the filth of unguided lusts.
Sayyid Mujtaba Musawi Lari
Rabi'ul Aww'a/, 1387 (1967)

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ILL NATURE

The Value of Friendship
Ill- Natured Individuals are Resentful
The Prophet of Islam: The Perfect Exemplar.

The Value of Friendship

Love is a natural human feeling. It is for this reason we see every man is attracted by an internal power to other members of his kind. Thus, this instinctive need must be fulfilled and every one must establish brotherly relations with certain individuals or groups so as to benefit

socially from such relations.
Love is the foundation of security and comfort. It is the most enjoyable spiritual need which develops with time. There is not a more valuable thing in this world than love.
The pain and suffering which result from losing a beloved one are most disastrous to man; spirits need other spirits for refuge or we would become torn in the hands of insecurity and anxiety, thus, becoming the victims of our own world's oppression. A certain scholar was quoted as saying in this regard, "The secret to happiness is to maintain brotherly relations with our world, instead of creating chaos. Those who can not love their own kind, can not live an anxiety-free and secure life."
The ties which best bring the various elements of a society to each other are those which are built on true feelings and real love. Harmony which exists between two souls is what makes them unit in the worlds of love and unity. It is from here that the basis of eternal happiness stems. Yet, in order for such happiness to survive, one must set differences aside and compromise with others on some of the issues which they rightly reject.
The most valuable friendships are those which are not built on personal interests but are twin with the feeling of brotherhood and are able to satisfy the human soul which needs love and comfort. A person who presents himself as a faithful friend should not allow any factor to shake his feelings towards that friend; in fact he should endeavor to remove the calamities and pains which befall his friend's heart, and demonstrate to him the gardens of hopes and comfort. Those who ask for the love of others should have the ability to give them the same prior to living in the shadow of their emotions. According to one scholar, "Our lives are like a mountainous area, whenever one makes a sound he hears the echo coming back at him; those whose hearts are full of love for others will experience the same from them. It is true that it is our material life that is built on exchange. We do not wish to say the spiritual life is built on the same basis, but how is it possible to expect faithfulness from others without being faithful to them? And how can one ask for love from others without loving them first?"
Interacting with others can be very harmful if it is not built on love and honesty from both sides.
If the nightmare of hypocrisy overtakes the hearts and lives of men; if flattery replaces honesty and friendship, harmony and sympathy will be weakened and the spirit of cooperation will be stolen from the society.
Undoubtedly, many of us have met others in society in whose hearts lay no real love or emotions, they concetheir real selves behind the cover of love. But frequently we are able to reach beyond that cover to their realities and actual feelings, and as a result, our relationship with them results in the destruction of their masks.
Indeed one of the prerequisites of happiness and an effective method of spiritual development is real friendship with righteous people. This is because personal thoughts develop under the shadow of such relationships, wherein the spirit rises to levels of piety and excellent traits.
Therefore, it is essential to carefully examine individuals to be taken as friends. It is an unforgivable error to establish friendships with any one whose honesty and purity are not verified —because man was created susceptible to the characteristics of others through his interactions with them. Negative relationships are a threat to the happiness of humanity.

Ill-Natured Individuals are Resentful

Certain characteristics and unwanted habits weaken the ties of love and sometimes result in breaking up excellent relationships. Hot-tempered individuals who are unable to keep the love of others, erect an indestructible wall between them and society, which prevents them from realizing the light of love. Ill nature, therefore, destroys the basis of happiness and devalues man's character. It is indisputable that bad manners keep people away from each other, for man suffers from the treatment of those whom he resents or cannot relate to. Thus, bad manners force people to give up many abilities, which could be very useful in the path of their advancement in life had they been well-mannered.

It is necessary for one who wishes to interact in his society to first realize the art of interaction, and after becoming familiar with it, put it to use according to the acceptable social rules. Without this process, a person cannot live in harmony with his society, nor can interpersonal conduct move towards perfection in such a society. Good conduct, therefore, is the main basis of happiness between people. It is also an important factor in bettering individual personalities.

In fact, good conduct allows man to make use of his abilities and become effective on the general level of managing society. There is not another characteristic equal to good conduct in attracting the love and affection of others and reducing the pains which maybe faced in life. Those who enjoy such good traits do not manifest their sad sides to others, hence preventing them from reaching beyond their privacy. Such individuals struggle to create a rainbow of happiness and affection around themselves to make those who interact with them forget their own miseries by giving them a sense of security. They also present their own security despite any troubles they may have, thus, increasing the chances of their success and victory.

Good manners are a strong element in securing success for many individuals. Needless to say, the success of commercial establishments is directly related to the good conduct of its employees.

A manager of a company who enjoys good manners is usually active and attracts many vital connections to himself. In conclusion, good manners are the secret behind being accepted by others. People cannot bear with ill-natured people regardless of their positions. A personal survey would reveal the reasons behind the inclinations towards certain individuals over others. A western scholar recorded the following regarding his experience in this field:

"One. 'day I decided to conduct an experiment on how my attentiveness and cheerful face affected my life. Prior to that day I was sad and depressed; on that morning I left the house with the intention of being cheerful. I thought to myself. I have noticed many times that other's attentiveness and cheerful faces give me strength. I wanted to discover if I, myself, could be influential to others in the same way. I repeated to myself while on my way to work, my resolution to be attentive and have a cheerful face; I even convinced myself that I was a very lucky man. As a result I felt a sense of comfort overtake my body. I felt as if I was flying. I looked at my surroundings with a wide smile on my face; yet I still saw many faces around me on which the features of sadness were apparent. My heart burnt for these people and I wished I could grant them some of the light from my heart.

"That morning I entered my office and greeted the accountant in a manner that he was not used to. Prior to this I rarely smiled and never greeted him like this even if my life was on the line. The accountant could not help but greet me with warmth and great affection. At that moment I felt that my happiness had truly affected him.

"The president of the company where I work is the kind of man who never lifts his head to talk to others, he is very unpleasant. On that day he harshly reprehended me, more that day than on any other day. I would not have put up with it; yet, because of my decision not to let any incident bother me, I answered him in such a manner that made some of the wrinkles on his face disappear. This was the second incident that day. Later on that day I endeavoured to keep my attentiveness and cheerfulness and pass them on to my co-workers.

"As such, I was able to practice this method with my family which resulted in positive consequences. As a result, I discovered that I could be active, happy and make others around me feel the same way.

This is possible for you too. Meet people with this attitude, have a cheerful face and the flowers of happiness will bloom in your life, as roses bloom in the spring-time, and you will gain many friends who will bring peace and tranquility to you eternally."

No one denies the great effect of this characteristic on softening the hearts of the enemies. Respect and good manners also play an important role in convincing one's opponents of the adherence to ideologies.

Another western writer said in this regard, "All gates are opened towards him whose face is cheerful and who enjoys good manners; while the ill-natured individuals have to knock down doors to open them just like gangsters. The best of matters are those related to kindness, good-manners and cheerfulness."

Moreover, I would like to add that good manners necessitate happiness and lead good-natured individuals to perfection, but only if such manners and traits stem deep from one's heart far from hypocrisy and pretense.

In other words, the feeling of love must be a manifestation of what is in the heart. The outside appearance is not necessarily a reflection of what is hidden in the hearts of men. It is possible that some of the good traits of an individual contradict his disturbed and misguided heart. Many are the devils that dress themselves in the garments of angels, hence concealing their fearful faces under a curtain of beauty.

The Prophet of Islam: The Perfect Exemplar

We all know that one of the most important factors of Islam's advancement was the perfect conduct of tile Prophet (S.A.W.). This fact is stated in the Holy Qur`an where Allah, the Almighty, says:

"And had you been rough, hard hearted they would certainly have dispersed from around you."

Qur`an 3:158

The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) treated all people equally. His deep and indescribable love for humanity was perfectly manifested in his angelic being. He attended to all Muslims' needs

equally.
“And the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) divided his moments between his companions: he would attend to this and attend to that equally.’’
Rawdah al-Kafi .p.268

He also condemned ill nature; he repeatedly said:
“Ill nature is evil and the worst of you are those who are ill-natured.”
Nahj a1-Fasahah, p.371

and:

“0 sons of Abdul Muttalib. surely you will not (he able to) satisfy people with your money, therefore meet them with cheerful faces and joyful conduct.”

Wasail ash-shia v.2, p. 222

Anas ibn Malik. the Prophet’s servant, used to say when he remembered his (the Prophets) excellent traits:
“I have served the Prophet (SAW.) for ten years; during this time he has never said ‘woe’ (as if complaining) to me, regardless of what I did or did not do.”

Fada’il aI-Khamsahv.1. p. 119

Furthermore, good conduct and cheerfulness are factors which prolong life. Imam Sadiq (A. S.) said in this regard:
“Kindness and good manners make land flourish and prolong lives.”

Wasã’il ash-Shia, v.2, P. 221.

Dr. Sanderson has written this on the subject:
“Kindness is an important factor in treating and preventing Illnesses. Most medications result in unwanted side—effects along with a temporary cure, while kindness causes everlasting cures to all parts of the body...kindness moves all powers of the body. Blood circulation in those who enjoy good manners is excellent, and their breathing is better...”
Pirozi Fikr

There is a beautiful point in Imam Sadiq’s statement. He (A.S.) says there is a direct relationship between kindness and good manners and stated that they are among the factors which prolong life. The reason behind this is that kind people enjoy a sense of happiness and satisfaction, thus, both kindness and good manners have the same desired effects. Imam Sadiq (A.S.) also considered these traits elements for achieving happiness when he said:
“Part of man’s happiness is his good manners.
Musadrak a/-Wasail V..2, p.83
Samuel Smiles added on the same topic:
“Good manners and emotional balance have their effects on man’s development and happiness just like other powers and Instincts do. As a matter of fact, individual’s happiness is greatly related to their affections and good manners.”
Akhlaq.
In addition, good manners make life easier and increase subsistence and harmony, Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Good manners bestow subsistence lavishly and make friends (more) intimate.”

Ghurar al-Hikam p. 279

S. Marden wrote the following in his book:
I know a restaurant manager who became very wealthy and popular because of his good conduct. I learned that travelers and tourists traveled long distances to reach his restaurant; they did so because in this restaurant they liked the privacy and the pleasant atmosphere. When the customers are at the restaurant, the said manager cheerfully greets them in a manner that is not duplicated anywhere. In fact, in this restaurant they do not experience the cold nuisance complaints that you find in other restaurants. In this restaurant the employees try to show affection and build friendly relationships with the customers, instead of the usual seller—buyer relationships. The employees smile a lot and give special attention to serving their customers,this attention stems from love and affection for their guests. The employees establish such relationships with their guests that the guests not only feel that they should come back but also bring their friends. It is clear how effective this method is in attracting new customers"
He added:
"Good Manners have not played a more important role throughout history than at this time. They have become the capital of those who wish to bring happiness and success to their lives
-Khish tan Sazi
Imam Sadiq (A.S.) included cheerfulness among the signs of man's ability to reason. He said:
"Those who have the most perfect reasoning amongst people are those who have the best manners.
Wasã'iI ash-Shiah v. 2. Pg. 221
Samuel Smiles says:
"History shows us that the greatest geniuses were happy and Optimistic men, for they realized the real meaning of life and tried to manifest their reason in their flesh. When one reflects on their achievements, he can clearly notice their healthy souls and thinking and their kindness and enthusiasm The greatest souls and most intelligent people all enjoy cheerful faces and happiness. Their manners were examples for those who adhered to them and were influenced by their conduct, hence they followed the light of' their kindness and natural happiness"
Akhlãq
The Honorable Messenger (S.A.W.) said:
"The most important traits which will lead my nation to Paradise are fear of Allah and good manners"
Wasail ash-shia, v .2. p. 221
Consequently it is incumbent upon him whose leader is reason and who desires to lead an honorable life to achieve this priceless spiritual capital, good manners. In order to eradicate an unwanted characteristic, man needs earnest desire to reach his goal. Aglance at the disadvantages that bad manners leave provides an incentive to lead him into struggling to eradicate such manners.

OPTIMISM

TRUST AND PEACE OF MIND
THE EFFECTS OF OPTIMISM
ISLAM CALLS FOR OPTIMISM AND TRUST.

Trust and Peace of Mind

Man needs stability more than any other thing in his unstable life. Those who engage themselves struggling to achieve goals without being equipped with the weapon of stability face failure and defeat . Infact, as one's responsibilities increase, his need for stability and assurance also increases. In light of this fact, it becomes the duty of everyone to learn how to avoid anxiety and revert to stability and assurance.

Struggling to acquire wealth, power, fame, and other material gains is not but falsehood. Efforts made in this path will go to waste, because mans happiness lies in his own soul, just as the spring of misery lies deep in the heart. Medicine, according to the Prince of the Faithful (A.S.), is within man's own soul, so we cannot find in outside influences the same effect that lies within the powerful resources of the human soul. Because outside influences are temporary, it is impossible that they would lead man to complete satisfaction.

Apictatus says:

"We must let people know that can not find happiness and good luck in places they randomly search for themselves. Real happiness does not lie in power and ability. Both Mirad and Agluis were miserable people despite the great power they had. Likewise, happiness does not lie in wealth and large amounts of money. Croesus, for example, was not happy even though he had vast wealth and treasures. Happiness also cannot be achieved by governmental power nor by political chokes. The Roman Ceasers were unhappy despite their great power.

"Actually, happiness can not be achieved by acquiring the above mentioned gains together. Nero, Sandnapal and Aghamnin were known for their continuous weeping because they were like toys in the hands of misfortune**.** Yet they had all the benefits of wealth, power and fame. Therefore, man has to search for the means of real happiness in his own soul and conscience."

We must admit that the solution for many unsolved questions in nature, and the rapid increase in machinery are not enough to bring about a worry free life. This new machinery is not only unable to reduce the amount of suffering in the world, but has also brought with it many new problems and uncertainties.

Therefore, in order to free ourselves from the continuous sufferings of life and go beyond the black clouds which darken our souls, we urgently need rightly guided minds. The mind can secure human happiness the same way it was able to bring about many advancements in our material living. It is here that the power of thinking becomes clearly manifested and shows its astonishing influence on man's life.

Clear mindedness is a fluent spring which advance man to a more excellent degree than material gains can by introducing him to a vast new world. Righteous thinking prevents clever individuals from becoming toys in the hands of money. Those whose thinking abilities grow to become the center of their existence can steadfastly stand in the way of infliction when it befalls them, by adopting a positive outlook. In order to safeguard ourselves from being

victims of various events, and to protect ourselves from the waves of negligence and exaggeration we must establish a scale of thinking for ourselves by which we can judge our behavior and conduct; hence guiding our souls to correct thinking that may equip us with spiritual powers to defeat anxiety.

A leading western scholar says:

"Perhaps we are unable to elect the counted individuals who's conduct and ways of thinking are most hike ours, but we are free to select our thoughts. We are the judges of our minds. We may choose that which we deem appropriate. The external causes and influences which we observe are not part of us that they may cand force us to think in a certain way. Therefore, we must choose the correct way of thinking and eradicate disadvantageous ones. Our souls are directed to the path of our thoughts. In other words, our thoughts direct us in any manner they wish; because of this we should not allow ourselves to hold any evil thoughts or to occupy our minds with that which we resent. Such thoughts can capture us and make us victims of different kinds of misery. We must struggle continuously towards achieving perfection and reaching the noblest hopes and most honorable goals as the secret of success and happiness lie in righteous thinking only."

The Effects of Optimism

In the same manner in which the body system becomes disturbed by various illnesses, the harmony of thoughts, which are held by one's mind becomes disturbed by different factors and evil traits. Despite the powers of the mind, it cannot be independent of a person's conduct. Therefore, man can only feel happiness when he enjoys good manners that conform to his thinking, conduct and enthusiasm. It is the responsibility of men to eradicate the roots of the traits that blacken his comfort and happiness.

Two elements which help create harmonious thinking are optimism and a positive outlook towards life and others. Optimism and positive expectations of those around you are guaranties of comfort for those who live in the field of humanity. Contrary to optimism are pessimism and ill-thinking of others which bring a halt to the ability of righteous thinking and reduce the ability to move towards perfection. Optimism can best be described as a light in darkness which widens as the horizon of thinking does. With it the love of kindness grows in man, thus counting a new development in his view on life and in his outlook at it. Enabling man to see a more beautiful color of life, hence, achieving the ability to observe all people in a new light and the power to equally and justly judge each one of them. An optimistic man's sufferings vanish and his hopes increase while keeping his apparent and spiritual relations with the various elements of the society in the best manners.

There is not a factor able to reduce the number of problems in a man s life like optimism can. The features of happiness are more apparent on the faces of optimists, not only in the instances of satisfaction but throughout life in positive and negative situations alike. The light of happiness shines from the optimist's comfortable soul of the optimist at all times.

The need to acquire other's trust is essential. In order for trust to exist between individuals,

optimism must become part of their lives. This is a fact which has its direct influence on the happiness of the individual and society. Trust among the members of any society is an important factor in the advancement of that society. The opposite is also true, for mistrust can always be a destructive element in the future of any social entity. The deeper the communication is between the various elements of the society, the faster development and advancement are. Also, among the leading social fruits of optimism are harmony, cooperation and trust. Moreover, peace in any social life can only be enjoyed if the relationship between the members of that life are built on affection along with trust and good expectations of others.

A scholar in this field of study said:

“Good expectation is a feature of belief, and nothing can be achieved without belief and hope.”

When one’s trust in others increases, his trust in himself also increases; this is one of the natural occurrences which happen in all societies with no exceptions. At this point we should not ignore the fact that there does exist a big difference between optimism and trust in others, and the unreasonable quick belief in any person. Trust does not mean that a Muslim should totally submit to those he does not know or listen to what they say without investigating their realities and examining them. Likewise, we cannot generalize the concept of trust to include those who are open in their crimes and injustices. In other words, trust has exceptions and should exclude some members of the society under certain conditions. In fact, a trusting person practices scrutiny and studies the expected conclusions of every matter. Therefore, his conduct is built upon precaution and carefulness, and his actions depend on careful examination and deep reflections.

Islam Calls for Optimism and Trust

Islam has planted root in the believers by filling their hearts with faith. It is in this manner that our religion leads its adherents to comfort and stability. The Holy Qur`an states that the Honorable Messenger (S.A.W.) was so confident that the hypocrites criticized him for it. Islam commands its followers to trust each other, and to assume that another’s intentions are good. Therefore, it is not permitted for anyone to judge a Muslim’s actions as corrupt without proper evidence for such a judgment.

The Prince of the Faithful (A.S.) said:

“Expect good from your brothers, unless something happen that makes you rule otherwise; and do not assume a word of his is evil when there is still the possibility of it being good”.

Jami’ as-Sa’adat v.2, p. 28
When people trust each other, it increases their love towards each other and brings harmony into their lives. The Muslims’ Imams expressed the importance of trust in many ways. Imam Ali (A.S.) once said:
“He who trusts others gains love from them.”
Ghurar al-Hikam.,
Dr. Mardin is quoted as saying:
“When you establish a friendship with someone, try to observe only his positive points: then try to appreciate in your consciences those good traits von have found in him. If you are able to center this advise in your mind, on will live a good and satisfactory life, and will discover that everyone presents his good and kind sides to you while trying to win your friendship for himself.”
Pirozi Fikr (Persian,)
It is even possible that optimism and trust affect the thinking and conduct of the misguided ones. In summary, they (trust and optimism) provide grounds for the salvation of such people. Imam Ali (A.S.) once said:
“Trust rescues him who indulged in sin.”
Dr. Dale Carnegie states:
“Recently I met the manager of a franchise of restaurants. This particular chain of restaurant is called “The Honorable Deal”. In these restaurants, which were established in 1885, the employees never presented a bill to the customers; instead the customers order what they wish to eat and after the meal they calculate the charges and pay the cashier without any questions.
“I said to the manager: ‘Of course you have a secret inspector?! You can’t trust all the customers of your restaurant?’ He answered: ‘No, we do not secretly watch our customers, yet, we do know that our method is appropriate, otherwise we would not have been able to advance during this last half century.’ The customers of this restaurant feel that they are dealt with honorably, it stems from the idea that the poor, rich, thief, and beggar all try to conform to the good conduct which is expected of them here.”
Mr. Louis, a social psychologist, has said:
“If you interact with an unstable, ill-natured man and are trying to lead him to goodness and stability, try to make him feel that you trust him, treat him like a respected and honorable man. You will find that he tries to keep the trust that you have placed in him. Consequently, in order for him to prove that he is worth your trust, he will try to do what makes him qualified for your trust.”
How to Win Friends
Dr. Gilbert Roben wrote:
“Trust children. What I mean is deal with them as if they have never made a mistake. In other words erase their past and forgive their wrong conduct. Try to assign important duties to those who do not behave well. With every new job that you give them make it appear as if they

have improved their behavior, and that they have become qualified for the job you have given them. It is possible to remove the obstacles which stand in the way of correction by good conduct and trusting the ones to be corrected. From here we can say that most of the unwanted aare not but reactions to fill space in the lives of the individuals."
Sir Yal Bint used to suggest to trust children who have a habit of stealing with some money, and give them jobs which conform to the ability of those who are lazy.
Trust guarantees comfort to the person.
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
"Trust is a comfort to the heart and security in faith."
Ghurar a/-Hikam p. 376
Trust also releases the pressure created by the miseries and misfortunes of life.
Imam Ali (A.S) stated:
"Trust reduces depression."
Dr. Mardin said:
"There is not a thing that makes life more beautiful in our eyes, reduces our sufferings, and paves the way for success like optimism and trust do. Therefore, be careful of painful thoughts just as you are cautious of illnesses and their dangerous effects. Open your minds to optimistic thinking and you will see how easily you can rescue yourself from existing thoughts."
Pirozi Fikr
It is essential for Muslims to behave with each other in such a way that does not leave room for ill expectations to penetrate their society. Imam Ali (A.S.), on this subjects, used to advise the Muslims to think positively about each other and not to act in a manner that would make others mistrust them. He (A.S.) also recommended that people should avoid places of suspicion. He is quoted as saying:
"He who holds hope in you has given you his trust, therefore do not disappoint him.
Ghurar al-H ikam p. 680
Imam Ali (A.S.) made the judging point for man's reason his thinking about others when he said:
"Man's expectation is the scale for his reason, and his conduct is the most truthful witness to his authenticity."
Ghurar al- Hikam p. 474
Because an individual whose expectations of people is negative lacks the ability to reason logically, Imam Ali (A.S.) made the Muslim's refusal of ill-thinking a sign of their spiritual power. He also said:
"One who refuses ill expectations of his brother, has healthy reason and his heart is at peace."
Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 676
Samuel Smiles said:
"It has been proven that those who have strong natures and spirits, are naturally happy and hopeful in life. They look at everyone and everything with trust and ease. Wise men see beyond every cloud a shining sun, and realize that behind every misery and infliction, exists the happiness they long for. These people find new power every time they are inflicted with a new problem; and find hope with every depression or sadness. Such nature enjoys real

happiness, and its advocates are lucky. The light of gladness shines in their eyes and they can always be seen smiling. The hearts of these individuals sparkle like stars and they see everything with an understanding eye and with the color they wish."
Imam Sadiq (A.S.) considered good expectation to be one of the Muslim's rights on each other.
"Among the rights of a believer to another believer.., is not to doubt him."
Usul al-Kafi V 1. p. 394
Truly the element most capable of giving man optimism and trust is faith. Had all people been one nation who believed in Allah, His Messenger, and the Last Day, it would have been natural for everyone to truly trust each other. The lack of faith among people is the reason for the acute disease of mistrust in society. A believer, whose heart is comfortable with belief and trust in Allah, depends on that unlimited power whenever he is inflicted with weakness. He seeks refuge in Allah during hardships: this trains his souls and deeply affects his morals.

3

PESSIMISM

The bright and Dark Points Of Life

The Negative Effects Of Pessimism

Islam Verses Pessimism.

The Bright and Dark Points of Life

Man's life is a mixture of pain and comfort. Each one of these two states absorbs a portion of life in this world. Every individual faces his own share of experiences and becomes a victim of pain and comfort from the problems and disasters of life. It is according to this bitter fact that man's life fluctuates between pain and ease.
We, as humans, cannot change this eternal law which rules our lives so as to subject it to our own desires. Yet, after we come to realize the deep meaning of this life, we can direct our vision towards the beautiful side of existence and cast away the ugly entities which tarnish the fact of life in this vast universe; this universe that is filled with the amazement of creation and precision of wisdom; which it tells us that every creature exists with an aim for which has been created. On the other hand, we can ignore or forget the bright points in the universe and concentrate on the gloomy spots. Finally it is up to every individual to choose the direction of his thinking. Hence, choosing the color and view of life he wishes to experience.
It is incumbent on us to prepare ourselves to face and choose that which is appropriate for us in order to avoid disadvantageous factors, so that we do not loose the ability of self-control.

Otherwise, we may face irreplaceable loses, or even fall victim to the typhoons of misfortune. Many of us imagine that had the sequence of events in our lives been different, we might have been happy people. In fact, these people's problems are not related to the events of their lives, but to the methods in which they deal with them. It is possible for us to change the influence of such events, or even transform some of their effects into useful ones.

A famous thinker wrote:

~Our thoughts always operate in the domain of hate and dissatisfaction, so we always complain and cry. The reason behind this crying is in our consciences. We are built in such a manner that our existence feeds on that which is not appropriate for our souls or spirits. Every day we wish and hope for new things, or perhaps we do not really know what we want. Yet, we believe that others have acquired happiness so we envy them while we suffer. We are like misbehaving children who invent new excuses and start weeping. Our souls suffer from their weeping and we do not relax until we make them understand the facts and abandon what they falsely imagine and their unruly wants.

These children, as a result of their numerous desires, become blind to everything but miseries. It is our obligation to open their eyes towards the good side of life. We must make them understand that none but those who open their eyes to the garden of life, can cultivate its flowers and roses. Those blind ones will obtain nothing but thorns. If we are able to pass the borders of depression and pessimism and examine the facts, we find that even in these times, which have fallen in a deep horrifying pit, there are exits everywhere with roses and flowers in the garden of life that call the sights of onlookers to themselves at all times.

Thought has a deep affect on man's happiness. In fact, the only effective factor on man's happiness is his ability to think and reason. An unprecedented incident is unbearable and destructive in the eyes of the pessimist, while in the viewpoint of the optimist, who sees things in a positive way, such incidents do not lead to submission nor do they cause a person to lose his sense of resistance under any condition. Optimists never abandon the borders of modesty, restraint and patience.

Those who condition themselves to think that the axis of evil surrounds them will only live a painful, gloomy and uncomfortable life. They will, in effect, loose many of their powers and abilities as a result of their exaggerated sensitivity and drown themselves in fatal ignorance of the blessings and good things of the world.

According to one scholar:

"The world reacts to man exactly as man deals with the world. Thus, if you laugh at the world, it will laugh with you. If you look at the world gloomily, it will appear gloomy. If you meditate on the world, it will count you among the mediators, and if you are merciful and truthful, you will find people around you who will love you and open the treasures of love and respect of their hearts to you."

Despite the bitter appearance of pain, it produces special fruit for the mind and soul. Man's spiritual abilities become more clearly manifested in the darkness of pain. Reason and human spirit evolve in the folds of continuousacrifices and unsubmissive struggle…to the peak of human perfection.

The Negative Effects of Pessimism

Pessimism is a dangerous spiritual illness. It is the cause of many losses, defects and disappointments. Pessimism is a painful misfortune that tortures the human soul and leaves unamendable defects on man's personality which cannot be erased.

When experiencing pain and/or inflictions people tend to become sensitive, at this point it is possible for pessimism to appear as a result of a strong revolt in the emotions and feelings of an individual. Pessimism which enters the mind in this way leaves its influence on man's thinking process.

The beauty of creation is not manifested in the eyes of one whose spiritual mirror has become darkened by the shadow of pessimism. Moreover, even happiness appears to him in the garment of boredom and disaster, and his ill thinking cannot comprehend conduct of innocent individuals clear of evil aims. Those whose thought become so negative will lose all of their advantageous abilities, because with their incorrect imagination they create many problems for themselves; hence, wasting their talents by worrying about incidents which they have not and probably will be not faced with. As we have said before, the effects of optimism spread to its surroundings and enliven the spirit with hope; likewise, pessimism dictates anxiety and pain to its surroundings, and eventually deprives them of the light of hope, which clears the path of life for mankind.

The disadvantageous effects of pessimism are not limited to the soul only,they adversely affect the body too. Studies show that pessimistic patients have a lower rate of cure. According to a medical doctor:

It is more difficult to treat those who are suspicious of everything and everyone, than to rescue a person who jumps in the sea attempting to commit suicide. Giving medicine to an individual who lives in constant anxiety is like placing water into boiling oil. In order for any medicine to he helpful it is essential for the patient to preserve his sense of comfort and belief."

Those who suffer from pessimism clearly experience a sense of loneliness and suspicion when dealing with others. As a result of such unsatisfactory situations these people destroy their abilities to develop and advance; hence, destining themselves to an unwanted life. In light of these facts, pessimism is found to be a main factor in suicide.

If we examine any sector of' human society, we will find that backbiting and gossip stem from suspicion that is paired with a lack of examination and reflection. Despite their weaknesses in judging and their vast imaginations, people often judge others without verifying the subject matter involved. These people imagine without confirming their suspicion, in some circumstances their personal aims can easily be depicted. This great shortcoming causes the ties of unity and sincere relationships to break and deprives people of trust in each other, which leads to the corruption of manners and souls as well.

Most incidents of enmity, hate and envy which are harmful to both the individual and society, result from suspicion which contradicts reality. Suspicion spreads in the society to point that it may even occupy the minds of philosophers and scholars. We can pinpoint many instances in history when scholars have committed grave mistakes by viewing their societies from the

pessimistic angle; thus building their ideas on the basis of criticism and search for the shortcomings in the social system. So instead of serving the causes of happiness, these confused scholar poison the spirit of their societies with their harmful thinking. They also subject the fundamentals of belief to criticism and disgust.
Abu al-’Ala al-Mauri was among the pessimistic scholars. This famous philosopher thought so negatively of life that he called for the prevention of intecourse in order to wipe out mankind; consequently riding itself of the sufferings of life.

Islam Verses On Pessimism

The Holy Qur`an clearly counts pessimism and ill thinking among the sins and evil deeds and warns
Muslims about thinking negatively of each other.
“O you who believe! Avoid most suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin.”
Qur`an 49:12

The Islamic religion prohibits suspicion if decisive evidence doesn’t exist. The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
“A Muslim is sacred to another Muslim: his blood, his property and (it is prohibited) for one to think negatively of another.”
Tirmidhi. Clip. 18, Ibn Majah, Clip. 2.
Muslim, Chp. 32, Ahmad, v.2, p. 277 and v.3, p. 491
Therefore, just as it is prohibited to transfer the property of one person to another without sufficient evidence, it is forbidden to suspect people and accuse them of evil doings before proving them guilty with undoubted evidence. The Prince of the Faithful (A.S.) said:
“It is not right to judge the trustworthy only on speculation.”
Nahj al-Balaghah p. 174
He then clarified the disadvantages and painful points of suspicion when he said:
“Be careful of suspicion, for suspicion ruins worship and makes sins greater.”
Ghurar al- Hikam p. 154
He even describes suspecting the kind as being oppressive.
“Suspecting the kind (doer of good) is the worst sin and the ugliest type of oppression.”
Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 434
He also says that suspecting the ones you love causes relations to worsen and finally to be cut off. Imam Ali (A.S.) states:
“He who is overwhelmed with suspicion does not leave any peace between him and his beloved one.”
(Ghurar al-Hikam p. 698
Suspicion has adverse effects on the spirits and conduct of others as well as the suspicious individuals. Sometimes suspicion diverts the suspected persons from the straight path and leads into corruption and lowliness. Imam Ali (A.S.) said:

“Suspicion corrupts affairs and instigates evilness.’
(Ghurar al-Hikam.)Pg. 433
Dr. Mardin writes:
“Some business owners suspect their employees of stealing which, in turn, forces the suspects to become what they are suspected of. Although suspicion does not appear in words or actions, it influences the spirit of the suspect and leads him to perform that which he is suspected of.”
Pirozi Fikr
Imam Ali (A.S.) also stated regarding suspicion:
“Avoid suspicion when not appropriate, for this calls the healthy to sickness, and the innocent to doubt.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 152
He also declared that those who suffer from suspicion are deprived of healthy bodies and spirits,
“A suspicious person can never be found healthy.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 835
Dr. Carl wrote about this subject:
“Some habits, such as complaining and suspecting people, reduce the individual’s ability to live. These negative behavioral habits adversely influence the sympathetic order and the body’s glands. They can also cause practical damage to the body.
Rah Wa Rasm Zindagi
Dr. Mardin adds:
“Suspicion eradicates health and weakens the behavioral powers. Balanced souls never expect harm, rather they anticipate goodness at all times because they know that goodness is an eternal reality, and that evil is not but the work of the weakness of the powers of goodness, just as darkness is the result of the lack of light. Thus, seek the path of light for it erases darkness from the hearts.’’
Pirozi Fikr
Suspicious individuals fear people, as Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“He who is suspicious fears everyone.
Ghurar al-1-Hikam p.712
Dr. Farmer is quoted as saying:
“Those who fear to speak out their ideas and viewpoints in public, where everyone clearly states their opinions, and Who seeks refuge on side streets and back alleys to avoid meeting their relatives on wide streets or in public gardens, are ruled by fear, suspicion and pessimism.”
Raz Khushbakhti
One of the factors which cause suspicion is bad memories which are concealed in man’s spirit. Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Hearts have evil notions and hearts resent them.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 29
Dr. Haleem Shakhter said:
“Those who lack self-confidence are overly sensitive, so They suffer from minor inflictions.

The memories of such inflictions remain in their minds subconsciously and affect their actions, words, anthoughts. Soon they fall victim to depression and suspicion and do not realize the reason behind their sufferings.

“Painful memories conceal themselves beyond our feelings and do not easily manifest themselves to us. In other words, it is natural for man to avoid painful memories and eradicate them from his mind. This concealed enemy never stops inflicting evil and hatred on our souls, manners, and conduct. We sometimes even hear or encounter words or actions from ourselves or others for which we realize no justifiable explanation. Yet if we carefully examine them we find they have been caused by evil memories.”

Rushde shakhsiyyat

People with lowly natures elect themselves to be judges over other’s actions, thus the misdeeds of others are reflected onto them. Imam Ali (A.S.) pointed out this fact when he said:

“Evil doers never think good of anyone because they see others with their own nature.”

Ghurar al-Hikam p. 80

Dr. Mann is quoted as saying:

“Some people place the blame on others by complaining about their deeds while they, themselves, do the exact same thing; they do this to make up for their own shortcomings and as a type of self-defense. This behavior is described as a method of avoiding anxiety; comparing others with one’s self is a resentful action. When this condition intensifies and the individual’s self-defense increases, he reaches the category of being ‘mentally ill’.

This defense can he caused by doing something socially unacceptable which in turn creates the sense of wanting to relate it to others.”

Usule Rivanshinasi

When the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) entered Medina after migrating from Mecca, a man came to him and said: “0 Messenger of Allah, the people of this town are men of goodness, they are kind; you have done the right thing in coming here.” The Messenger (S.A.W.) said to the man: “You speak the truth.” Another man then came to the Prophet and said: “Messenger of Allah, the people of this town are evil, it would have been better if you did not migrate to them!” The Messenger of Allah then said: “You speak the truth.” When the people heard the Prophet’s reply to both the men, they questioned him. The Prophet answered them: “Each of them spoke that which was in his mind, therefore both of them are truthful”. The Prophet (S.A.W.) meant that each of the men was truthful about himself.

The forbidden type of suspicion is clearly understood as misguided thinking and the inclination of the soul towards ill thinking and insisting of it. More prohibited than this type of suspicion is acting on it. Because the thoughts and notions which pass through the mind without any actual effects on the individual’s conduct cannot be considered subject to jurisprudential legislation. These thoughts are involuntary, avoiding them is also involuntary; but it is the individual’s option to manifest or not to manifest them in his actions.

The miseries of the pessimists stem from this terrifying disorder. Therefore, it is incumbent on those who can pinpoint the reason which caused them to be overly suspicious to treat their cases and rid themselves of such misfortunes.

4
LYING

The Position of Manners in Society
The Disadvantages of Lying
Lying is Prohibited by Religion

The Position of Manners in Society

Manners are an essential factor in societies and in the perfection of nations. Manners were born as a part of humanity. No one denies the vital role that manners play in bringing peace, happiness, and felicity, to man's spirit; nor does anyone doubt their useful and decisive influence in strengthening the fundamentals of the integrity of conduct and thinking on both the social and public levels. Can you find anyone who suffers from honesty and truthfulness and searches for happiness in the shadow of treachery and lying? Manners are so important that even the nations that do not believe in religion respect them and feel that it is essential for them to abide by some set of ethics to be able to advance on the winding path of life.
Everywhere societies are found and under all conditions manners share some similarities.
The famous British scholar Samuel Smiles says:
"Manners are one of the powers that move this world. In their best senses manners are a manifestation of human nature at its highest peak, for manners are a presentation of human nature at humanity. Individuals who excel in any field of life endeavor to attract the people's attention to them with every means of honor and respect. People trust these individuals and imitate their perfection, because people believe that they possess all the gifts of this life, and that if it had not been for the existence of such individuals, life would not be worth living. If inherited genetic features attract the attention and appreciation of people, then manners necessitate gratification and respect of all well-behaved people. This is so because the first set of characteristics is the work of genes and the second set, the fruit of pragmatism and the power of thought's and it is the mind that rules us and manages our affairs throughout our lives.
~~Those who have reached the peaks of excellence and greatness are like bright lights clearing the way for humanity and guiding people toward the paths of morality and piety. If the members of a society anywhere lack good behavior, they will be unable to reach excellence regardless of how much freedom and political rights they enjoy. It is not essential for nations to possess vast areas of land to live honorably; for there are many nations with large populations who own vast areas of land yet lack all the necessities of perfection and greatness. Thus, if the morality of a nation becomes corrupt, that nation will eventually vanish."

All agree with what this scholar has said; yet. there is a great difference between knowing the facts and acting on them that matters here. There are many people who substitute their animalistic inclinations in the place of good conduct. They substitute excellent morals for lusts which appear in life like bubbles appear sparkling on the water's surface.
Man has undoubtedly come out of the factory of life bringing with him completely contradicting instincts. Now man is constantly the subject of a fierce struggle between the traits of evil and goodness: the first step to eradicate man's evil traits is to capture his lusts and anger in this battlefield for they are the cause of his animalistic power, envy. It is incumbent on anyone who wishes to achieve perfection to avoid extravagance on either side and to rid himself of his harmful inclinations that stem from such traits and change them into useful and beautiful feelings. The reason for this is that man benefits greatly from his feelings, but such feelings can only appear good if they are obedient to the commands of reason.
According to one psychologist:
"Human feelings are like a container that is divided into two sections. The first section being offensive and the other defensive., If man can direct his defensive feelings to become victorious over the offensive ones, then he will gain control of his existence and lead it as he desires not as they desire."

Those who have balanced their internal powers with their lusts and that which their dreams prefer, and have created a sense of peace between their minds and hearts, have undoubtedly followed the path of happiness between the problems of life with a will free of weakness, failure or defeat. It is true that man's abilities have reached a very advanced level of practicality, movement and speed, which give mankind the chance to reach deep into the depths of seas and oceans using his thinking powers. Yet, what we observe today of the continuous misery and fluctuation in the heart of civilization has reached the point that it has become like a toy in the hands of problems and inflictions. This can only be blamed on the diversion from the path of noble traits and spiritual values.
Dr. C. Roman writes:
"Science has advanced in this era but manners and feelings are still in their primitive stages. If manners and feelings had advanced along with reason and mind, then we could possibly state that mankind hadvanced in their humanity too."
According to the laws of balance and equality, the fate of a civilization that lacks noble traits faces destruction and extinction. The reason for the persisting miseries and imperfections in various societies is a phenomenon of people's needs for moral values. Values that would spread the spirit of life in the flesh of the dying civilization and grant it the powers it righteously deserves.

The Disadvantages of Lying

There are as many advantages for truthfulness as there are disadvantages for lying. Truthfulness is one of the most beautiful traits and lying one of the ugliest. The tongue translates man's internal feelings to the outside, therefore if lying stems from envy and or enmity it is one of the dangerous signs of anger; and if it stems from stinginess or habit, it is from the effects of the burning lusts of man.
If man's tongue becomes poisoned with lying and its filth appears on him, its effects are like the effects of the autumn wind on the leaves of trees. Lying extinguishes the light of man's existence and lights the fire of treachery in him. It also has an amazing effect in terminating the ties of unity and harmony between men and spreads hypocrisy. As a matter of fact, a great deal of misguidance springs from false claims and empty words. For men with evil intentions, lying is an open door to help them reach their selfish goals by concealing the facts behind their magical words and capturing innocent people with their poisonous lies.
Liars leave no time for themselves to think or reflect. They rarely think about the possible conclusions, claiming that "no one will ever discover their secrets." In their words we find many mistakes and contradictions, liars will eternally become covered with shame, failure

and disgrace. It is true, therefore, to say that "liars have bad memories".
One of the factors which spread this resentful trait which poisons social manners is the saying:
"Constructive lying is better than the painful truth."
This saying has become a veil to cover this lonely trait, and many people resort to it in order to justify their resentful lies. These people ignore what reason and jurisprudence say about this issue. Islam and reason command that if a Muslim's soul, honor or essential belongings are endangered it is his obligation to defend them by any means possible, including lying. It is a valid maxim that say, "Necessities legalize the prohibited". Necessary lying has its limitations, it must stop on the border of necessity. If men widen the circle of "constructiveness" to include their personal wishes and lusts, there would not be a lie without a so-called need behind it. One of the great scholars says in this regard:
~There is a reason for everything. It is possible for us to invent factors and reasons for all actions. Even the professional criminals have excuses for their crimes. Therefore, there are advantages and needs for every lie ever uttered. In other words, every lie that is told serves a purpose and the liar is good: if a liar gained nothing from lying there would be no reason to hide the facts. This stems from the fact that it is man's nature to consider everything that may be advantageous to him to be good. If man suspects that his personal benefits may be endangered by the truth, or imagines there is goodness in lying, then he lies without any hesitation for he sees evil in the truth and goodness in lying.''
We should not ignore the fact that lying is a great evil, and that if some harm is removed by lying (when permitted), it is with the view of countering the greater evil with a lesser one.
The freedom of speech is more important than the freedom of thinking because if someone makes a mistake when exercising his freedom to think, only that individual is harmed. One the other hand, when exercising the freedom of speech, the welfare of the society is at stake. The advantages and disadvantages of freedom of speech affect the whole society.
Ghazali has said:
"The tongue is a beneficial gift. It is a delicate creature, which regardless of its small size performs an extremely important job when it comes to obedience and disobedience. Both disbelief and faith are manifested with the tongue, and they are the ultimate worship or disobedience."
He then added:
"Only those who can confine their tongues to religion are able to avoid evil. These people never set their tongues free unless it is beneficial to their lives, faith, and eternal place of rest."
Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. Kimiyaye Sa'adat
It is important to avoid lying and contradicting the truth in front of children so that this evil trait does not enter their hearts. Children learn how to act and speak from their families and those around them. Therefore, if lying and/or contradicting the truth penetrates the family atmosphere, children will be affected and in turn be inflicted with the same illnesses.
Morris T. Yash said:
"The habit of thinking, speaking, and endeavoring to find the facts is only practiced by those who were brought up surrounded by it as children."

Lying is Prohibited by Religion

The Holy Qur`an explicitly categorizes liars as disbelievers:
“Only they forge the lie who do not believe in Allah’s communications, and these are the liars.”
It is understood from this verse that believers do not subject themselves to the filth of fabrication.
The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) stated:
“Adhere to truthfulness; for truthfulness guides to Paradise. Surely a man continues to tell the truth and searches for it until he is written as truthful near Allah. And avoid falsehood; for it leads to the Fire. Man continues to lie until he is written as a liar near Allah.”
.Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 418
Among the characteristics of liars is that they only believe after annoying insistence. The Messenger (S.A.W.) said:
“Surely those who are most frequent in believing people are most frequent in telling the truth; and those who mostly doubt people are the most frequent liars.”
Dr. Samuel Smiles writes:
“Some people assume that their own lowly characteristics are normal to other’s natures while, in fact, we know that people are mirrors of their own manners. Hence, the good and bad that we see in others is not but a reflection of that which is in our consciences.”
Courageous people with good manners and conduct cannot bear falsehood nor can they accept to be polluted by such filth. Liars suffer from a mental disorder which keeps them from speaking the truth. Those who resort to lying subconsciously feel weak and humiliated, for lying is the front of the weak and the cowards.
Imam Ali (A.S.) is quoted as saying;
“If entities were materialized, surely truthfulness would stand with courage and cowardice would stand with lying.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 605
Dr. Raymond Peach said:
“Lying is the best defensive weapon of the weak and the quickest way to avoid danger. Lying in most cases is a reaction to weakness and failure. If you were to ask a child, ‘Did you touch this candy?’ or ‘Did you break this vase?’ If the child realizes that admitting the mistake will result in punishment, his instinct tells him to deny it.”
Ma Wa Farzandane Ma
Imam Ali (A.S.) stated the clear benefits of truthfulness in a clear narration:
“The truth teller achieves three things: (other’s) trust, love, and respect.”
“Be not mislead by their prayers and fasting, for a man can become fervently used to prayers

and fasting so that if he would abandon them he would feel lonely. Rather, try them when it comes to telling the truth and fulfilling trusts.”
Usul al-Kafi v.1 p. 460
Imam Ali (A.S.) has said on this subject:
“Lying is the most abominable trait.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 175
And Dr. Samuel Smiles writes:
“Lying is the ugliest and the most disgusting trait among all lowly characteristics. It is important that man makes his only goal throughout the various stages of life to be truthfulness and honesty, and not to give them up in any case for any other cause or goal.”

Akhlaq

Islam based all. Its behavioral and correction processes on faith, and made faith the basis for man’s happiness.
“Manners without faith are like a palace built on mud ice.”
or as another scholar explains:
“Manners without faith are like seeds planted on rock or between thorns; they eventually wither away and die. If the most noble traits are not motivated by faith, they are like dead crops near a living person.”
Religion rules the heart and mind together, it is the arena for bringing harmony to them. Religious feelings reduce material wants, and create an impenetrable barrier between the believer and lowliness. Those who are comfortable by belief always have assigned goals and feel at ease.
“Surely with the rememberance of Allah the hearts feel at ease.”
The Holy Qur`an

Islam judges man’s character by the degree of his belief and his favorable traits, and fervently struggles to strengthen these two factors. For instance, Islam has made man’s faith a guarantee for the credibility of his statements when he executes an oath. According to the Islamic penal code, a Muslim’s oath can replace evidence, under certain circumstances. and is therefore decisive in settling disputes. Islam has also made man’s testimony a method for proving rights.
Thus, if lying appears in its red fearful shape-in any of the above mentioned cases, than it is clear how great damage can result form such behavior.
In the Holy Qur`an lying is considered to be an unforgivable sin.
“And never accept a testimony from them.”

The Holy Qur`an

The basis of the intensity of the sin of lying is distinctly related to how much damage is done

by such a sin. Hence, because lying under oaths and in testimonies is more damaging, the punishment for such a sin is more severe.
Lying is a technique leading to all other evil traits.
Imam Hassan al-Askari (A.S.) said:
“All spiteful traits are placed in a house and the key to this house is lying”.
Jãmi’Sa’adat v.2 p. 318
In order to further clarify what Imam al-Askari (A.S.) said, we bring your attention to the following prophetic narration.
A man came to the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) and asked him for some advice. The Prophet (S.A.W.) replied:
“Abandon lying and equip yourself with truthfulness.”
The man, who was an invariable sinner departed promising to never again commit another transgression.
Indeed, those who keep company with the honest and are habitually truthful, both verbally and practically will surely live a life free of sorrow and deprivation; their minds and spirits will shine with belief far from instability and fear, and far from vague thinking.
The slightest reflection on the result of lying whether related to religion or material gains will teach a most valuable lesson to anyone who craves to lead a life of honor and dignity. The after effects of lying are but lashes of warning.
Truthfulness can only be achieved under the shadow of manners and belief. Whenever these conditions are weak, human happiness does not have a chance of surviving.

* * *

5. HYPOCRISY

Endeavor to cherish your personality.
Hypocrisy: The Ugliest Trait.
Burn Down the Dwellings Of Hypocrisy.

Endeavor to Cherish Your Personality

The most important element in happiness and the most exalted characteristic that man can enjoy is perfection. This valuable spiritual jewel grants life greatness and authenticity, and guides man to the peak of honor and dignity. All men are humanly equal. Yet, they vary and differ just as their ability to reason and think do. Man’s spiritual habits and behavioral characteristics also differ. The characteristics of a person are all that which distinguishes individuals from each other and define everyone’s abilities and social positions. Moreover, the human character directly influences us more than any other factor.
Man was placed in this universe to endeavor to develop his capabilities and widen the horizons of his thinking and real realization; thus, improving his knowledge and strengthening his spirit in order to achieve perfection. In other words, man is in this world to qualify himself

for the fulfillment of his specific duties. With this in mind, it is the responsibility of every individual to establish a healthy and honest personality, and to work in the path of happiness. The harder man works in this path the more he realizes the true meaning of success. There is nothing more capable of giving him the strength to venture into the rough sea of like than healthy personality.

According to Schopenhaure:

"The variations between personalities are natural and their role in bringing sorrow and happiness into man's life is more than that which is brought by the difference between various human differences. This is because the characteristics of a personality (such as productive reasoning and pure affections) can never be compared to what man can gain from material belongings. For a reasonable individual is able to create an enjoyable living for himself even if he is secluded. On the other hand an ignorant person cannot rid himself of laziness although he could have all the luxuries of life, even if he were to spend large sums of money to do so. Reason, management, and the ability to be affectionate, are among the vital factors which bring man closer to reaching the goal of his life and open the gates of happiness towards him. Therefore, it's our duty to give special importance to the development of these factors more than the development of material gains.

All characteristics and habits share a position in deciding man's future, and every thought and feeling greatly affect these characteristics and habits. It is notable to mention that the manners and conduct of every person are constantly changing towards perfection or otherwise.

The first steps towards developing and perfecting the personality is to learn the methods of exploiting the hidden powers and capabilities of one's self, and prepare the self to eradicate all the factors which may pose problems in the path of perfection. Man can then purify himself from all lowliness. If a person does not know his own value, he or she will never be able to bring life to it, nor will he be able to create any fruitful changes therein.

Words and actions hold no real value unless they stem from the depth of one's own existence. Words manifest the holdings of the mind, it is as if they were translations of the otherwise hidden secrets therein. When Words contradict one's actions this speaks of an unstable Personality and consequently has devastating effects on the individual's life.

Hypocrisy: The Ugliest Trait

Hypocrisy is Undoubtedly one of the most detestable qualities. It is in man's nature to accept happiness and freedom; and to upgrade itself to the highest degree of dignity. Yet when man becomes polluted with lying, violation of promises and breaching of agreements, hypocrisy finds itself a wide arena and is ready to penetrate such polluted natures. Hypocrisy advances in these circumstances until it eventually becomes an acute disease. Hypocrisy not only prevents individuals form reaching the truth or even attempting to discover it, but it also becomes an indestructible dam placed on the path of acquiring noble characteristics. Of course, all that stands in the path of sensible conduct and psychological integrity; and

contradicts the life of happiness which relies on spiritual perfection.
Hypocrisy is a dangerous epidemic which threatens man’s honor and dignity, leads to irresponsibility and lowly traits, and replaces his self-confidence with Suspicion, pessimism and anxiety.
Those who reach the dangerous point in their behavioral misconduct convince themselves that they want the best for all people. When this troubled person (hypocrite) deals with an unharmonious couple he presents himself as a dear friend and faithful advisor and then turns around and puts the other down, greatly criticizing him, while in fact he feels no spiritual or moral relations to either of them.
False compliments, unconditional acceptance of other ideologies, and refraining from the defending righteousness when it is essential, are all characteristics of hypocrites.
According to a great scholar, hypocrites are more dangerous than archenemies:
“Enemies have the characteristics of being both covert and overt enemies; for animosity hajust one color. I wish that friends were like enemies as far as pretence is concerned. Undoubtedly friends that are hypocrites are worse than the common hypocrite.”
Because the hypocrite is unable to win the hearts of those he deals with or gain love and respect, his life is full of humiliation and disgust. His attempts to conceal the facts prevent him from living a secure, stable, and anxiety free life; for he is in constant fear of the inevitable discovery of what he really is.
One of the elements of social sorrow is the way hypocrisy is spreading and the lack of honesty and sincerity among various classes of society. If hypocrisy penetrates the structure of a community and overwhelms the hearts of its members, then in addition to the deceit and lowliness which become apparent among them; such a community will face an inevitable downfall.
The British scholar S. Smiles said:
“The conduct of contemporary politicians is on the path of corruption and disorder. The opinions which they give in their reception rooms varies from those they give in public speeches. For instance, these politicians praise the people for their patriotic feelings and then turn around and laugh at the same in their private meetings.
“Fluctuations of thought exist in our era more than at any time in the past, and principles change and vary as interests do. I believe that hypocrisy will gradually crawl out of its lowly shell and eventually become a praiseworthy quality; for if the upper class of a society becomes used to hypocrisy, all other class will follow adopting the same views, for they derive their habits and conduct from the higher classes.
“The fame which is gained today is earned when the evil traits of the people are exposed, ignoring the noble qualities of ally
There is a Russian proverb that says:
“He who has a strong spine can not be promoted to higher position.”
The spines of men who adore fame eventually become weak and flexible so as to follow the tides of reputation by deceiving people, concealing the facts from the public and speaking exactly as the lower classes long to hear. Worse yet is to exploit the dissention and hypocrisy which might exist between the different classes of society. Such fame cannot be viewed by righteous save with disgust and resentment, and its advocates have no respect or honor.

Sincerity and honesty are manifestations of a pure conscience and are the most honorable traits of life. These traits, which are found in those with truly pure souls, harmonize personalities and bring peace, unity and strength into the community. It is natural for man to love his faithful friends more than those he doubts, and as the love of the faithful increases, the hatred for the hypocrites also increases.

Burn Down the Dwellings of Hypocrisy

When Islam started advancing rapidly, the party of hypocrites who felt that they were threatened more than all other opposition parties attempted to destroy the pillars of the Islamic government. They made oaths to the Prophet (S.A.W.), then declined to fulfill their duties when the time came for them to execute them. They also criticized the believers.
This destructive and corruptive minority was not able to tolerate the people's faith and devotion to the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.). The leader of these hypocrites was Abu Amir (the priest), who was the chief of the People of the Book in Medina, where he gained a reputation among the people for being a religious man. He prophesied the advent of the Prophet (S.A.W.) prior to his Message and during the first stages of his Prophet hood. Later he was unable to tolerate the loss of his reputation because of the spread of Islam, so he migrated to Mecca and joined the polytheists war against the Prophet (S.A.W.) at Badr and Uhud.
Abu Amir then fled to the Romans where he began plotting to eradicate the tree of Islam. It was with his instigation that his companions built the "Mosque of Dissension in Medina. At the time this Mosque was constructed no one was allowed to build a mosque without the consent of the Holy Messenger (S.A.W.). The Prophet (S.A.W.) granted them permission to build the mosque and when he returned from the battle of Tabuk, the people of the mosque called the Prophet to honor the opening. Beforehand, Allah, the Almighty, had revealed to His Messenger the men's evil intentions and the Prophet refused to go and commanded the army to destroy the mosque.
"Only he shall visit the mosques of Allah who believes in Allah and the latter day, and keeps up prayer and pays the poor rate and fears none but Allah; so (as for) these, it may be that they are of the followers of the right course."
Qur`an 9:18
In this manner their treacherous plotting was foiled, and the first place of hypocrisy was burnt.
The Holy Qur`an greatly criticizes this group and condemns them in many verses:
"And there are some people who say: 'We believe in Allah and the Last Day'; and they are not at all believers.
"They desire to deceive Allah and those who believe, and they do not perceive.
"There is disease in their hearts, so Allah added to their disease and they shall have a painful chastisement because they lied.

“And when it is said to them. ‘Do not make mischief in the land’, they say: ‘We are but peace-makers’.
“Now surely they themselves are the mischief-makers, but they do not perceive.”
Qur`an 2. 8-12

Hypocrisy is a spiritual disease; this might have been what Imam Ali (A.S.) was pointing out when he said:
“Be aware of the people of hypocrisy for they are the misled, the misleading, and the leaders to wrong paths. Their hearts are ill; and their appearances pure.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 146
Dr. H. Shakhter said:
“There are some people who argue for no other reason except to become famous. These people are not sure about their beliefs nor do they really believe in what they argue about, yet they would rather criticize others instead of remaining silent as it is difficult for them to tolerate others indifference to them. Another type of people are those that when they notice people’s indifference to them, follow the path of hypocrisy to create dissension and hence prove their existence.”
Rushd Shakhsiyyat
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“A hypocrite: His words are beautiful, and his inner (conscience) is ill.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 60
A hypocritical person does not have a group he can rely on, therefore, he constantly lives in confusion. The Messenger (S.A.W.) described hypocrisy by saying:
“A hypocrite is like a sheep confused between two herds.”
Nahj al-Fasãhah p. 562

The Prophet (S.A.W.) revealed to us three signs of a hypocrite when he said:
“And there are three signs of hypocrites: When they speak they lie. When they make promises they do not keep them. And when they are trusted they cheat.”

Bihar al-Anwar v.15, p. 30

Imam Baqir (A.S.) said:
“It is evil for a worshipper to have two faces and two tongues, praise his brother in his presence and slander him in his absence. If he gives to his brother he envies him, and if his brother is tested he fails (to help him).”

Bihar al-Anwar v..15,p 172

Imam Ali (A.S.) pointed out another characteristic of hypocrites when he stated that they are always defensive but critical of others:
“The hypocrite is a flatterer of himself, and a defamer of other people.”

Ghurar al-Hikam p.88

Dr. S. Smiles said:
“Flatterers and hypocrites always think about themselves and are never concerned with others. They concentrate on their own actions and affairs until their minor and lowly existence becomes their universe and great idol.”

Akhlaq

Imam Sadiq (S.A.W.) explains Luqman's following admonition to his son:
"A hypocrite has three signs: his tongue contradicts his heart, his heart contradicts his conduct, an his appearance contradicts his inner (beliefs)."
Bihär al-A nwär v.15, p. 30

Man's thoughts reveal his real self. People who attempt to conceal what is in their hearts beneath hypocrisy and flattery will never be successful, for their reality and the truth will eventually be revealed.
A man said to Imam Sadiq (A.S.):
"When a person says to me: 'I like (or love) you.' How do I know that he is telling the truth?"
The Im(A.S.) answered the man:
"Examine your heart, if you like him then he likes you. Look in your heart, if it refuses your companion then one of you has done something."
Al-Wafi v.3, p. 106
Dr. Mardin said:
"If you really think that you can introduce yourself with words then you have deceived yourselves. Because others will not judge you by the norms you wish to assign. Rather they will know you by your actions, words, conditions, conscience, and your inner self. The people who you talk to will notice the strengths and weaknesses of your ideas, your hypocrisy and reality from your speech and even your silence. The people around you will discover your hopes and intentions, and then form their opinions about you; even if you object to some of their views about you, they will be unwilling to change them.
"Sometimes we hear people say: 'I can't even stand to look at a specific person.' These individuals cannot tolerate the hated ones, even though they may have some praiseworthy traits or a pleasant appearance. People who feel this way do so because they have read the thoughts and feelings of others. We also feel that Way about some people. This is the effect of thoughts. All our thoughts and feelings spread around us and others sense them with the rays of their thought''
Pirozi Fikr
Imam (A.S.) said:
"Healthy consciences have more truthful testimonies than eloquent tongues."
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 105
When we say hypocrisy, we mean it in a broader sense than just ideological, behavioral, moral, or verbal hypocrisy, for Islam has called all its adherents to a total and comprehensive unity, so as to lead them to a sincere life free of hypocrisy, dissension and treachery.

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6. SLANDER

A Society Polluted with Sins

There is no doubt that at the present time societies suffer from various types of spiritual deviations and psychological corruption, and have failed to develop their manners at the same pace that they were able to secure material luxuries for themselves. Such societies face a great number of acute diseases which have overwhelmed the ocean of life with pains as days go by. Those who earnestly struggle to avoid pains end up intoxicated with sins and in search of refuge in the lap of lowliness in order to their spiritual pains and anxieties. Yet, the sun of felicity shall never beam its bright rays lives.

These people have deceived themselves believing that they have become free of all restrictions and rules; and are now competing in the fields of Lowliness and failure. When we carefully examine the lives of these people who lack manners, we find that the rapid advancement of material methods the aims for which they were invented. They have made the material phenomena an axis for their hopes and wishes, and the gloominess of sins has overshadowed their societies.

It would have been more productive if they had used their vast wealth, which they spend on deviation and disarray, in the field of implementing good authentic manners, which cannot be changed. Nevertheless, the norms for their accepted behavior is constantly changing.

Needless to say that unless noble traits become the judging point for good personalities in any given society the members of that society will not observe them but rather will become overwhelmingly influenced by the social mind which leads them to imitate others actions, ignoring any possible adverse affects. In the light of this we should realize that contemporary civilizations lack the ability to bring about healthy, noble characteristics, nor can they guarantee salvation or happiness for any society. Dr. Carl, the famous French scholar, said: “We need a world where every one can find a proper place for himself without discriminating between material or spiritual needs. With this we are able to realize how we can live, for we realize then that advancing on the path of life without a righteous guide is a dangerous affair. Now that we realize this danger, it is amazing how we have neglected the search for methods of reasonable thinking. The fact is that only a handful of people have really discovered this danger. The majority of people are overtaken by their lusts and are so intoxicated with them

that, regardless of how much advanced technology offers them, they are unwilling to give up any of their illegal joys for the sake of a decent civilization.
“Life today is like a magnificent river which runs down a steep slope, washing our hopes and dreams into the sea of corruption and deviation, for the sake of satisfying immediate desires and instant needs. Many people have devised new needs and now struggle hard to fulfill these needs. In addition to these needs, there are other things that bring temporary happiness to them, such as slander, backbiting, aimless conversation, etc. which are in fact more harmful than alcohol to their health.”
One of the social deviations on which we elaborate is slander; it is unnecessary to explain the technical meaning of slander, for it is known to everyone.

The Disadvantages of Slander

The most dangerous disadvantage of slander is the destruction of the spiritual personality of the slanderer’s conscience. Those who violate the natural path of their thought will lose their thinking balance and their excellent behavioral system; in addition to harming people’s feelings by revealing their secrets and faults.
Slander destroys the throne of human morality and deprives man of his dignity and noble qualities with amazing speed. In fact, it burns the veins of morality in the hearts of the slanderer to ashes. Slander diverts pure thoughts to the point that the gates of reason and understanding come to a dead end. When we reflect on its harm to society,we discover that it has done great damage to its members.
Slander plays a devastating role in bringing about enmity and hatred among the different members of society. If allowed to spread in any nation, slander will deprive it of greatness, a good reputation and create an unamendable dissension in that nation.
It is unfortunate that we must acknowledge the fact that slander has found its way into all social classes. This point confirms the fact just as the events of life are related, so are the spiritual and psychological deviations that may appear in a social class penetrating to all other classes. As a result of the spread of slander, pessimism and suspicion shadow the social mind; people loose trust in each other and replace it with mistrust. With this in mind, we can safely say that unless society enlightens itself with brotherly thinking and noble qualities, it will never gain harmony or unity therein. A society which lacks the blessings of noble traits is surely distanced from life’s real characteristics.

What Causes Slander to Spread

Regardless of the fact that slander is a manifestation of practical sins, it is directly related to human spirituality. Slander is a sign of a dangerous underlying psychological disorder for

which we must search the spiritual and psychological realms.
Behavioral scholars mention a number of reasons for the spread of slander. The most important being:
Envy, anger, conceit, self-righteousness and suspicion. Undoubtedly, every action by any individual stems from a certain condition lying in his conscience, and as a result of a manifestation of such conditions, which are like burning coal under cold ashes, the tongue, the translator of man’s feelings, speaks out slander.
When a certain characteristic becomes deeply rooted in man’s conscience, it blinds his eyes and rules his thought. One of the reasons that slander is so widespread is that slanderers are heedless of its dangerous after-effects. We see people who refrain from most other sins but don’t think twice about committing this miserable crime. The repetition of slander without concern as to its after-effects deprives man of control of his ability to refrain from following his lusts regardless of his knowledge of their dangerous reality. These people endeavor to achieve integrity and perfection. Individualslike this remove themselves from reality by refusing to bear the least bit of pain in the path of obtaining happiness. In this way, they fall prey to the rule of their lowly lusts.
Those who do not observe their own or other’s dignity are not abiding by the law of ethics; and a person who makes life an arena for his lusts. encroaching upon other’s rights deserves misery.
Poor quality of manners originates from weak faith, and manners are a result, of belief (faith). If a person has no faith, he has no motive to behave well or observe moral excellence.
Everyone has an opinion as to the best method of rescuing people from deviation and moral corruption. In my opinion the most effective way is to encourage the qualities of good will in people by awakening the calls of goodness and human instincts in them and leading them to exploit the treasures of their minds on the path of obtaining happiness. By bringing people’s attention to the effects of ill manners and strengthening their will, we may become victorious over all evil characteristics, and replace the rails of darkness with noble traits.
Dr. Jago writes:
“When we intend to fight an undesirable habit we must first recognize its evil results. Then we should acknowledge the habit and finally reflect on the incidents which made us victims of such a habit. If we acquaint ourselves with the stages of this habit, we will become triumphant over the inspiration of that habit by feeling the joy of eradicating it.”
With the existence of the seeds of integrity in the human soul and by providing it with the methods of defense, we are able to recognize the reasons behind misguidance and confusion and eradicate them from our souls and consciences, erecting a strong barrier in the face of our endless wants and lusts.
Actions present the actuality of people to us and therefore are reflections of their honor and reality. For this reason, if a man desires happiness he must select his righteous actions in order to transform them into valuable seeds of happiness. Men must also keep in mind that Allah is aware of all his actions no matter how minor they might seem.
According to one philosopher:
“Do not say that the universe has no reason nor sense, for by saying so you accuse yourselves of lacking reason and/or senses. Thus, if the universe had no reason or sense, you, too, would

be senseless and unreasonable."
In the same manner that a society needs material essentials to be able to continue living, it needs a certain amount of harmony required to maintain spiritual ties between its various members. A society which strictly observes the heavy burden of its social duties can greatly benefit from them in obtaining integrity.
In order for us to bring our souls out of the darkness into light, we must strengthen all noble thoughts in our minds to counter any destructive ideas or inspirations. By guarding our tongues against slander, we take the first step towards happiness. In order for us to counter the wide spread of corruption, it is incumbent on us to create a psychological revolution among the people. We can do this by observing the rights of others which in turn will cause the roots of humanity and spirituality to grow, thus taking another step towards the advocacy of noble traits on which the survival of every society depends.

Religion Verses ill Manners

The Holy Qur`an manifests the reality of slander in one short but eloquent verse:
"Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it,"
Therefore, in the same way that it is natural for a human to reject eating the flesh of a dead person, his reason should resent slander. The religious, leaders gave as much attention to correcting the feelings and psychological characteristics of people as they gave to their struggle to eradicate polytheism and atheism.
The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
"I have not been sent save to perfect noble manners.
People have been guided to morality by the great Islamic school, backed by strong and logical understanding. Islam considers any encroachment on the borders of morality a great and reprehensible sin.
In fact, Islam did not stop at categorizing slander as a grave sin, but has made it the duty of all Muslims to defend the honor of one who is being slandered.
"If a man is slandered while you are present, be a helper to the man, reprehend the slanderer, and depart the group."
Nahj al- Fasahah p. 48
The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
"He who defends his brother's honor in his absence, then it is his right upon Allah to safeguard him from the Fire."
Nahj al- Fasahah p. 613
The Messenger (S.A.W.) also said:
"He who slanders a Muslim during the month of Ramadan, will not be awarded for his fasting."
Bihãr al- Anwar v.16, p. 179
The Messenger (S.A.W.) also described the Muslim as follows:

“A Muslim is one who from whose hands and tongues other Muslims are safe.”
It is clear that if an individual allows his tongue to slander his Muslim brother, then he has certainly violated the rules of morality, and becomes a criminal in the eyes of humanity and Islam. All Islamic schools have unanimously agreed that slander is a major sin; for the slanderer violates the Divine commands and crouches upon the rights of others, heedless of the Creator’s commands.
Just as an absent person cannot defend his honor and dignity, a dead person is unable to defend himself; therefore, it is the duty of every one to respect the rules concerning the dignity of the dead.
Slander and backbiting are one sort of spiritual pressure. Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Slander is the strain of the weak”.
Ghurar al-Hikam p.36
Dr. H. Shakhter said:
“Disappointment in obtaining one’s needs results in spiritual torture. This spiritual torture instigates us to depict a form of defense. People differ in the kind of action they take in such situations. If a man feels that others do not give him the kind of attention he expects, for fear of being rejected, he chooses isolation and loneliness over socialization. He may sit in the corner of a gathering silent and secluded, not speaking to anyone, criticizing them; or laughing by himself for nor reason. Or he may argue with others, slander the absent, and criticize the rest until he proves his presence in this manner.”
Rushde Shaksiyyat
Dr. Mann, in his book entitled, The Fundamentals of Psychology writes:
“In order to preserve our honor, we may try to substitute our defeats or shortcomings by blaming others for them. For instance, if we fail an exam we blame the teacher for the questions given; or if we cannot get promoted to a position, we put the position down or slander those who occupy it. Or we may hold others responsible for our inability while in fact they are not.”
In conclusion, in order to develop good traits, we must observe ourselves and maintain pure intentions. We should start with ourselves, so that we can obtain appropriate grounds for our happiness and the happiness of our society in all fields.

7. FAULT-FINDING

Ignorance of One’s Own Faults

One of the greatest behavioral weaknesses of man is the ignorance of his own faults. In many instances the soul ignores an unwanted quality which results in the subconscious adopting of such a trait as a basis of misery. When a person becomes the slave of his ignorance, he kills the spirit of morality in himself. Thus becoming the victim of his inclinations and various lusts, which isolate him from happiness and comfort. Under such conditions, neither guidance nor constructive advice can be productive.

The first requirement for the salvation of oneself is to realize your shortcomings. The only way man can eradicate ill manners and rescue himself from the dangers of his personality that may lead him to misery, is if he recognizes these manners.

A careful study of the characteristics of the human psyche, so as to educate mankind, is a vital step toward leading to both spiritual and behavioral integrity. Reflecting on oneself allows the individual to realize his shortcomings and positive points, eradicate the unwanted tr, and purify the mirror of his soul from the filth of sins by conducting a basic purification of his manners.

We commit an unforgivable mistake when we carelessly ignore the real reflection of ourselves in the mirror of our actions. It is our responsibility to discover our own characteristics in order to pinpoint the unwanted traits which unwillingly have grown in us. Undoubtedly we will be able to eradicate the roots of such traits, even prevent them from appearing in our lives by constantly struggling against them. At any rate, achieving noble traits requires forbearance with long lasting hardships. It is not an easy matter to execute.

In order for us to eradicate the roots of dangerous and harmful habits, we not only have to recognize them but also must possess a strong will to do so. The more organization we can apply to our actions, the straighter and more productive our thoughts become. The advantages of every step in this process become manifest to us as we move on to the next stage.

Dr. Carl has written:

‘The most effective method to transform our daily program into an acceptable one is to examine it with scrutiny every morning and review the results every evening Thus, in the same manner that we anticipate to finish a certain job at a specific time, we should include in our schedule certain steps so others may benefit from our activities. We should be fair and just in Our conduct.

“Behavioral lowliness is just as repulsive as bodily dirt. Thus, it is just as important to cleanse our bodies form dirt as it is to purify our manners of filth. Some people exercise before and/or after sleeping; reflecting on our manners and thoughts is just as important as these exercises. By studying the way we should act and struggling to observe the borders of our designated limits, we can see our realities without any barrier. Our success in decision making is directly related to our inner-selves. It is incumbent upon every one whether young or old, rich or poor, learned or ignorant. to realize what he has done in daily expenditures and earnings, as scientists write down the results of their experiments. By applying such methods with scrutiny and patience, our souls and bodies change for the better.”

The Sarcastic and the Insulters

It is the nature of some people to search for the faults, mistakes, and secrets of others and to criticize and blame them for these shortcomings. Yet in most circumstances, these people's faults and shortcomings greatly exceed their noble traits. They ignore this and occupy themselves with the misfortunes of of hers.

Insulting others is an evil trait which pollutes man's life and degrades his behavioral characteristics.

The elements which motivate man to put others down become more dangerous when accompanied with conceit, arrogance and self-righteousness. These behavioral complexes instigate man to make false judgments while thinking that they are positively the right ones. Those who constantly criticize others waste their efforts in manners unacceptable to reason or law. They give too much importance to observing their friends' faults in order to insult and downgrade them, ignoring the fact that by doing so they deprive themselves of any opportunity to notice their own mistakes, thus leading themselves from the path of guidance and righteousness. Those who lack courage do not observe any rule or respect the honor of others; they cannot live in harmony with the closest people to them. When these people cannot find acquaintances to insult, they turn to relatives and friends; for this reason these people are unable to make real friends whose love and respect they can enjoy.

Men earn their honor throughout their lives; therefore, those who offend the honor of others, subject their own honor to insults and destruction.

Although those who constantly insult others may not realize the amount of damage they do to themselves, they cannot stop themselves from the social reaction to their wrongdoings. Wrongdoings which bring them nothing except hate, enmity and disgust. They feel sorry, but as it is said, "It is impossible to bring a bird back to its nest when it has flown away."

He who wishes to socialize with others has to define his own duties and responsibilities, one of which is to always look for the virtuous traits and good deeds of others in order to be able to glorify them. He must also rid himself of the traits which insult the dignity of others and contradict the fundamentals of love, for love only survives if it lives within the exchanges of respect and observance of both parties. He, whose habit it is to conceal the shortcomings of his loved ones and friends will enjoy more stable relationships. It is also complimentary if one is able to bring the attention of those he loves to their weak points so the individual has a chance to change.

Of course, it is necessary for an individual wishing to bring his friend's attention to an unpleasant trait to apply special skills so as not to insult or "hurt his feelings."

According to one educator:

"It is possible to bring the attention of your listener to his mistakes by a glance or a gesture, it is usually unnecessary to speak directly. If you were to say to someone, 'You made a mistake, he would never agree with you for you have insulted his reason, ability to think and self-confidence. Confronting him openly makes him resist your action without adjusting his views, even if you prove to him beyond doubt that you are right. When you bring a conversation do not open it with, 'I will prove it to you.' or 'I will substantiate that,' for this means that yon are smarter or more clever than the person to whom von are speaking. The act of correcting someone's thinking is a difficult task so why add more trouble by the wrong

procedure and creating an irreversible barrier.
“When you propose to prove a point it is important that others are not aware of von attention. You should proceed towards your goal with precise steps without allowing anyone the opportunity to discover your aim. Remember the following saying when working in this field: ‘Teach people without being teachers.”’

Religious Teachings Verses Sarcasm

The Holy Qur`an warns the sarcastic of their gloomy fate, and cautions them about the results of their evil actions. It is written in the Qur`an:
“Woe to every slanderer, defamer.” Islam deems it obligatory for all Muslims to observe the rules of manners and good conduct so as to preserve unity. Islam also forbids slander and sarcasm in order to avoid dissension and the weakening of brotherly relationships. Therefore, it is the duty of every Muslim to observe the rights of others and to refrain from insulting or humiliating them.
Imam Sadiq (A.S.) said:
“A believer becomes more reassured near another believer than a thirsty man does when he finds cold water.’’
al-Kafi v. 2, p. 247
Imam Baqir (A.S.) said:
“It is enough of a fault of an individual to note the faults of people and ignore that which he suffers from, criticize others for something that he himself does or to hurt an intimate friend with that which does not concern him.”
aI—Kafi v.2. p. 459
Their grandfather, lmam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Avoid the companionship of those who search for people’s shortcomings, for their companions are not safe from their plots.”
Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 148
Although it is part of man’s nature to refuse criticism, one should be attentive to constructive criticism. It is under the shadow of constructive advice that we are able to prepare the elements for advancing ourselves, if Allah wills.
The Commander of the Faithful (A.S.) reminded us of the above-mentioned fact when he said:
“Let the closest to you be from among people who guide you to (discover) your shortcomings, and aid you against your own wrong inspirations.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 558
The following is from Dr. Dale Carnegie’s book How to Win Friends and Influence People:
“We must listen to criticism and accept it for we should not expect two-thirds of our actions and thoughts to be accurate. Albert Einstein admitted that ninety-nine percent of his ideas and conclusions were false. When someone wants to criticme, I find myself being defensive

without even knowing what he wants to say; yet, when this happens I later resent myself.
“We all prefer praise and glorification and refuse reprehension and criticism without observing the degree of appropriateness and accuracy of any of these comments. We surely are not the children of proof and logic but the children of feelings. Our minds become like sailing ships which are tossed around by the waves of feelings on a dark sea. At the present time most of us are self-confident, but in forty years we shall look back at ourselves and laugh at our actions and thoughts.”
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“He who searches for people’s shortcomings should start with himself.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 659
Dr. H. Shakhter has said:
“Instead of objecting to the utterances or actions of others it is better to reflect on your own problems and pains if possible correct them. it is incumbent upon each one of us to reflect on our problems, discover our faults and shortcomings and solve them if we can.”

Rushde Shakhsiyyat.

The ignorant attempt to conceal their shortcomings instead of endeavoring to eradicate them. According to Imam Ali (A.S.):
“It is stupidity in a person which causes him to observe the faults of others and not notice that which is concealed of his own faults.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 559
Dr. Auibuty has stated:
“Because of our ignorance, we frequently ignore our shortcomings and conceal them under a veil of ignorance and unawareness so as to lure ourselves in this manner. It is amazing how people will try to conceal their shortcomings from the eyes of others without ever attempting to eradicate them. Yet, when one of their faults is revealed and they cannot conceal it, they create thousands of excuses to satisfy themselves and others. These people attempt to downplay the importance of their faults in the eyes of people, forgetting that as days go by the importance of such faults will become more manifest. Exactly as a seed grows to become a mighty tree”.
Dar Jostojuye Khushbakhti

Studying the personality is the only accepted method by psychologists to diagnose and treat various illnesses. Imam Ali (A.S.) advised people of this very same method. He said:
“It is incumbent on men of reason to pinpoint their shortcomings in religion, opinion, behavior, and manners and to gather them in their heart or in a book and work on eliminating them.”
Ghurar aI- Hikam p. 448
Also according to a psychologist:
“Sit comfortable in a quite room with a clear mind and ask your family not to let anyone bother **you.** The more comforting the place is and the more at rest you are the better it is: because what we intend to do requires a basic rule which is not to allow your thinking to be disturbed by concentrating only on the main objective. Also, your body should not be diverted by your bodily needs.
“Take with you some dark cheap paper and a pen which you can write with easily. I mentioned dark cheap paper so as to allow you to use a large quantity without worrying about expense. I also mentioned an easy pen because you will be surrounded by thousands of spiritual and psychological factors when you study yourself, you will need a pen that will not distract you.
“Make a list of the types of feelings and reactions which **you** encountered in yourself on this day and the day before. Now review each one of them, think deeply about them, next write down everything that comes to your mind regarding these feelings without any reservations or limitations. Do not worry if it takes a long time.

“When you have written all your actions, thoughts. feelings. and reactions, bring to mind the instincts of self-love, seclusion. conceit,.. .etc, Now match every action or thought with the instinct which motivated it by asking yourself the simple questions: Which instinct motivated this action or utterance?
“The purpose of this psychological self-analysis is to allow the patient to change as much of his spiritual personality. as his lively and constructive spiritual powers can by eradicating his psychological reactions and nervous states. This way he will consciously feel that he is a new person. Hence, he will realize new goals and meanings in life and be able to draw a new path in life For himself other than the previous one.”

Ravankavi

8
ENVY

An Enigmatic and Corrupt Desire!
The Envious Burn in the Fire of Failure and Deprivation
Religion Verses Envy

An Enigmatic and Corrupt Desire!

Man lives in constant movement between waves of problems and miseries in this unstable life. He struggles to reduce the strain of hardships on his soul and body, so he may harvest the roses of hope, and manifest them in his life one by one. As long as man’s relationship with life is not amputated by the danger of death, and he sees a path to hope, he will endeavor to achieve happiness. In conclusion, light of hope that grants man life, and makes its bitterness sweet.
Some of us hope to become rich and to obtain wealth, and struggle to achieve them in a manner that knows no boundaries. While others seek fame and position. People’s deeds are related to their wants and the degree of spiritual and psychological integrity they reach. Desires also vary just as thinking varies. But we have to realize that hope brings happiness to our lives when they conform spiritual needs, fulfill our mental requirements, develop our information level, light up the paths of our lives, and rescue us from hardships and miseries. Instincts, such as stinginess or conceit may be the root of miseries in life. Envy is one such instincts which diverts men from the straight path and imprison the conscience to prevent men from reaching hopes. The envious cannot begin to see others in the shadow of happiness. They feel great pressure on themselves that stems from their pessimistic outlook towards others goodwill. It is reported that Socrates said:
“The envious spends his days destroying himself by feeling sorry for that which he cannot

achieve but others have. He feels sorry and regretful. and desires all people to live in misery and infliction while plotting to deprive them of their happiness."
A leading writer, wrote:
"Our souls are like a city located in the middle of a desert without a fort or a wall to protect it, they are the victims of the thieves of happiness. The smallest winds can send the waves of the sea of our souls clashing. and more than one enemy of the soul enters the depths of our spirits to command and forbid until the last breath. Every layman knows that he should go to a doctor if he is inflicted with a headache but he who is inflicted will envy and will deny it and will never find anyone to treat him."
The envious make the fortunes of others their goal, they apply every method to deprive others of their fortunes. They are prey to their lowly wants without realizing it. The envious manifest their evil intentions by spreading accusations and lies about the envied ones. And if they feel that their lusts are not satisfied by doing this, they may even go as far as to encroach upon their freedom or even deprive them of the right to live, just to fulfill their endless wants. Indeed these are the inclinations Do these inclinations conform to the real goal of human life? And are they natural?
Not only do the envious lack the title of humanitarian, but they are lower than animals. For he who does not care about the pains of others cannot be a real manifestation of humanity.

The Envious Burn in the Fire of Failure and Deprivation

One of the most effective element in advancing and developing in the arena of life is to penetrate the hearts of others hearts and influence them. Those who have the ability to control other's hearts by their maneuverability and noble traits can enjoin the support of the members of society during their advancement in life; hence obtaining the keys to success. Good people are like lights in a society they shine and lead the thoughts of its members leaving deep effects on their behavior.
On the other hand, envy causes the destruction of good traits and noble manners, and prevents the hearts of people from allowing valuable spaces for their com, or to discover the star of love shining in the skies of their lives. Therefore, envy deprives the envious from enjoying the feelings of cooperation and help. Moreover, when the envious manifest their feelings with their tongues or actions, and display the nakedness of their filth to the public, they gain only the waves of hatred and public resentment. The apparent anxiety and deep sadness which he inflicts upon himself by being envious pressures his soul and lights a fire within himself that burns his beloved soul.
The reason that the soul of the envious burns in the flames of anxiety and restlessness is clear. Because the divine sustenance is constantly increasing despite his hopes, he constantly suffers from sadness and pain that overshadows his heart. Envy is like a destructive storm which pulls the trees of morality from their roots in a manner that the envious can find no way to stop.
When Cain saw that Abel's sacrifice was accepted rather than his own, he envied him and planned to kill him. Envy had planted its claws in Cain's heart and deprived him of the brotherly and human feelings. It lead him to crush his brother's head with a huge rock and drown the holy body with blood. Cain did this for no reason other than the fact that Abel (his brother) had pure intentions and conduct. The quiet universe had witnessed the very first

crime of envy, as a result of a despicable crime committed by the very son of Adam (A.S.). After Cain had committed this terrible crime, he felt regretful; but the sorrow that Cain experienced never helped him for he fell victim to the reprehension of his conscience for the rest of his life. If Cain had pondered on the realistic and accurate way of thinking, he would have sought the reason for his deprivation of Divine Blessings for...
“Allah only accepts from the pious.
According to Shcopenhauer:
“Envy is the most dangerous of human feelings. So it is necessary that man considers it his arch enemy, and works to eliminate it from the path of his happiness.”
Furthermore, if envy becomes widespread in a society, many unwanted phenomena appear among people such as arguments, etc. In a society that is full of pain and problems, every individual becomes an obstacle in the way of the happiness of others, instead of becoming an element of perfection and social integrity. When envy enters a society it prevents social salvation, hence the spirit of cooperation, comfort and confidence between the members is eradicated, a matter which leads them to destruction despite their civilization and development.
According to Dr. Carl:
“Envy is responsible for our stinginess, for it is an obstacle in the way of spreading the achievements of the industrial countries to the Third World. Envy also prevents many capable people from leading their countries.”
Most violent crimes which occur these days stem from envy. This becomes apparent with a careful study of social events.

Religion Verses Envy

Allah, the Almighty, has said in the Holy Qur`an:
Despite the fact that it is in man’s nature to love and achieve benefits for himself, he is requested to comply to the jurisprudential laws, the logic of reason, and the social welfare when he attempts to respond to his said nature.
Therefore, when Allah grants someone a benefaction, no one should encroach upon or deprive him of this gift for the one reason of fulfilling his envious lust or in order to take advantage of him. Rather man is expected to follow a reasonable and accepted path to his hopes in life.
Allah, the Almighty, said:
“And do not covet that by which Allah has made some of you excel others; men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn; and ask Allah of His grace; surely Allah knows all things.”
Qur`an 4: 32
Thus we should do our best and supplicate to Allah to grant us from His eternal treasures, to make our difficult matters easy for us, and to bring us closer to our goals and hopes. Had the envious, who spends his thoughts and feelings in other than their legitimate field, directed

them towards the path of his goals and pursuing his wishes, then the rays of happiness shall inevitable light his way.
Many traditions have been narrated to us by the Imams (A.S.) that warn us about this resentful trait (envy) and call us to guard against its dangerous effects. The following narration from Imam Sadiq (A.S.) shall suffice for now. He pointed out two spiritual factors which lie behind envy when he said:
“Envy originates from the blindness of the heart and the refusal of Allah’s blessings (glory be to Him) which are (the two factors) two rings of infidelity. It is with envy that Adam’s son fell victim to the sorrow of eternity and became afflicted with eternal damnation from which lie shall never be rescued.”
One of the elements which cause envy is ill upbringing at home. If the parents love one of their children and bestow him with special love and affection while depriving the others of the same treatment, the children who were left out will establish a sense of humiliation and rebellion. The type of envy from which many people suffer generally originates at home and causes sorrow and misfortune for a large portion of the society. Such an outcome is a natural matter when the basis of ruler ship is built upon injustice, oppression, racism, sectarianism, nationalism, etc. in any society. The members of this type of society will be overwhelmed by dissension, and the flames of hatred and envy will kindle in their hearts.
The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) forbade Muslims from diversion of justice between children to prevent the sins of envy and other sins from polluting their lives. He said:
“Treat Your children equally when giving them presents.”
Nahj a1-Fasahah p.366
Professor Bertrand Russell quoted the author of the book The Fairchild Family when he wrote the chapter regarding the method of avoiding concealed sins, as saving:
Lucy was given a small notebook to record any ill thoughts which may enter her heart. Her parents gave a glass to her brother and a cassette tape to her sister at the breakfast table in the morning without giving Lucy anything. Lucy wrote in her notebook that a bad thought had crossed he mind at the moment. She thought that her parents loved her less than they loved her brother and sister...’’
Imam Ali (A.S.) pointed out the harm which envy can cause to the body when he said:

“Amazes me the ignorance of the envious about the soundness of their bodies.”
Ghurar aI-Hikam. P. 494
Dr. Frank Haurk also said:
“Protect yourselves and thoughts from the pains of psychological feelings, for they are the satans of the soul which are not satisfied with destroying the system of thought in man but also cause poisoned cells to grow. These feelings cause fatal harm to the body. Such pains slow down the blood circulation, weaken the nervous system, inhibit bodily and spiritual activity, deprive one of reaching his goals and hopes in life, and downgrade man’s level of thinking.
“Man must free his environment of these enemies, for they are fatal. They must be imprisoned in isolation away from human life. Those who do this will discover that their will is strengthened, and will become triumphant over any probable obstacle in life.”

Pirozi Fikr
Imam Ali (A.S.) is quoted as saying:
“Envy inhibits the body.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 32
He also mentions its psychological harms as:
“Safeguard yourselves against envy for it ridicules the soul.”
Ghurar al- Hikam p. 141
According to a psychologist:
“Intense envy is one of the acute psychological pains which create many pains, unamendable mistakes, oppression and injustice to the soul. Let it be known that many of the envious actions are not done by his will but in accordance to the commands of the evil of envy.”
Ravankavi
We should not allow lowly hopes and lusts which transform the sweetness of life to bitterness, erect an invincible dam toward noble goals and hope to achieve the highest and most excellent human traits. Such traits that are capable of guiding our thoughts to the right path, will eventually lead man to his noble goals.
lmam Ali (A.S.) sa:
“Compete in desirable traits, great hopes and exalted ideas, and your rewards will become greater.”
(Ghurar al-Hikam p.355)
Dr. Mardin said:
“If you concentrate your thoughts on achieving certain traits, you will eventually reach them.
“The natural entities are children of natural thoughts. Therefore, if you hope to live in harmony, happiness, and security then you shall live so. If you have gloomy outlooks and see everything negatively you can rescue yourselves from this weakness in a short time by directing your thinking to the opposite of this negative attitude by thinking about that which necessitates activeness, happiness, and felicity of life. Aim at noble traits, pursue them with decisiveness and resolution, because it is with the insistence to acquire them that you prepare your minds to accept such noble traits and consequently reach them.
“Do not hesitate to repeat your intentions to reach your goals and hopes. Let your intentions be seen on your face and see after a short period of time how your thoughts magnetically draw you towards your goals.”
Pirozi fikr
Dr. Mann elaborates on this issue in his book:
“We have experienced and discovered that thinking about a certain action necessitates that action occurs slightly before. For example. if we think about clenching our fists, we find that the muscles in our hands become slightly flexed and the nerves become prepared to contract enough to appear on the docolanometer. There are some people who can make their hair stand on their bodies, make their pupils enlarge or contract or narrow the veins of their hands by imagining that they are in freezing water. All this is done by concentration.”
Usule Ravanshinasi
Realizing the facts helps our minds, wills and inclinations. It is the veil of lust which blinds our minds and creates disturbance in them. Thus, it is man’s duty to safeguard the mirror of

his facts and realities. He should also erase from his soul the chains of hatred which pressure the soul so that the soul become free of its pains and ills. He then should compensate his soul with goodwill for others in accordance with the rules of humanity.

9
CONCEIT

The Light of Love in the Horizon of Life

Conceit Leads to People ‘s Resentment

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Our Leaders and Modest

The Light of Love in the Horizon of Life

It is love that lights the horizons of life. Love plays deep and vast roles in man’s material and spiritual development; it holds magnificient and astonishing power. This power was implemented in man’s conscience and continues to grow until in some instances it comes like an endless sea. If we extinguish the light of love from the horizon of life, the darkness of disappointment and the horror of loneliness will prevail over-shadowing man’s spirit, and the face of the world will become gloomy.

Man was created sociable, therefore, socialization is necessary for his survival. Hence, that which makes man resent the society and prefer loneliness and seclusion stems from mental imbalance. It is a clear fact that a man can not reach happiness without others. For as the bodily needs drive him to socialize with others, the soul also has demands for survival, which is socialization. The soul requires love, and man continues to search for the fulfilment of his spiritual need.

Man is in constant need of love and affection from the day he enters this world and starts his existence until the minute the gates of life are closed in his path. Man feels the results of love in himself and in his conscience. When the bearings of life overpower him, the misfortunes afflict his soul, and when filled with sorrow, the rays of hope cease to illuminate his life. At this time, man’s thirst for love and affection increases greatly. This thirst is what lights man’s heart with the hope of relief and ease. It is then that he will not guarantee tranquility and comfort for his conscience save in the shadow of love. Indeed ills true to say that there is not a cure for pains, sorrows and hardships except through love.

Man’s love for his brother is a true manifestation of human affections. It can even be

considered as the root of all noble morals and their praiseworthy advantages. Love is transferable and applies to everyone. The method with which we are able to gain the love of others is by being generously kind to them, and by realizing that our responsibility towards our own kind is to grant them love and affection.
Showing affection to others is very rewarding, for if an individual grants a portion of this precious feeling to others, he will receive much more of the same in return. The keys to people's hearts lie in the hands of men, he who wishes to follow a path to these precious jewels must fill his heart with the light of serenity and honesty, and eradicate all resentment.
It is the philosophers holding that the perfection of an entity is manifested in its peculiarities and affects, and man's peculiarity lies in socialization and love. Tim love and spiritual relations which exist between people are the basis of stable and peaceful living together.
According to Dr. Carl:
In order for a society to achieve happiness, it is essential that all its members live in harmony with each other, just as the bricks in a structure do. Love is the only matter that grants a society such harmony: the kind that exists between the members of the whole human family. There are two parts to man's love for other men; the first requires him to love, and the second leads him to try to gain their love on the same level Yet unless every man earnestly attempts to abandon all resentful habits, exchanges of love can not be achieved. We cannot reach this goal save by freeing ourselves by psychological revolutions from corruption which isolates us from others. It is then that we will experience neighbors dealing generously with each other, arid employees and employers acting respectively towards each other. Love is the only element which can bring about the order that existed in societies of ants and bees for millions of years."

Conceit Leads to People's Resentment

Self-love is a basic human instinct. It is an essential factor for survival, for man's vast relationship with the universe rises from this instinct. Nevertheless, despite it being a fruitful power from which many noble traits arise, if this natural source is exaggerated, many sins and various immoralities will stem from it.
The first real threat to manners is extravagance in self-love. For it can reach a point where it leaves no place in the heart for loving others. Such extravagance is what prevents people from admitting their mistakes, or from accepting such facts that are inconsistent with their emotional conceit.
Professor Robinson said:
"It often occurs that we change our thoughts or ways of conduct **without** anxiety or disturbance, yet if someone discovers

our errors or shortcomings we experience a spiritual revolution which makes us defensive towards him.

"We easily convert to new ideologies, but when someone attempts to convert us, we fanatically stand against him, while in fact, we do not sincerely possess such a strong feeling toward our belief. We feel that our feelings are greatly endangered if someone says to us: 'Your watch is slow or your car is old'. We then suffer much more than if it was said to us: 'Your knowledge regarding Mars or Egyptian civilization is wrong'."

The most fatal danger to happiness,and the worst enemy of mankind are conceit and exaggerated self-confidence. People's resentment of any ill trait does not match their resentment of conceit. Not only does conceit cause the ties of love and harmony between brothers to cease, but it also transforms them to feelings of enmity, and opens the gate of general resentment toward the conceited one. In the same manner that one expects other's love and respect, he should attempt to observe their honor.

It is the society that guarantees everyone his rights and responsibilities. Each individual receives as much love and respect from his society as his qualifications and abilities offer. He who is limited to loving himself, sees only what he wants and is careless about other's feelings and affairs. He insistently attempts to make himself subject to exaltation and fame, and forces his arbitrary conceit on others.

The stubborn anticipation of people's respect is inappropriate because of the severe contradiction between his anticipation of people and their resentment of his conduct. Such social reaction will only cause the conceited to suffer and bear anxiety and unrest.

Among the other evil results of conceit are suspicion and pessimism. The spirit of a conceited person burns in the flames of pessimism and suspicion; so he feels everyone intends to harm him. He also cannot but notice the continuous carelessness, resentment and humiliation which he encounters from people. He consciously or subconsciously suffers from such treatment from which arise hatred and a sense of revenge against his society with every possible chance. His soul does not rest until he seeks revenge, and then his spiritual revolution will cease.

The evil of conceit does not approach man's conscience save when man is afflicted with a sense of lowliness which causes the disorder of humility. This disorder which is painful and destructive and from which many dangers and crimes may stem is a matter that causes the conceited individual to suffer more miseries.

A brief review of the world's history reveals that it is the conceited ones who have always resisted the calls of prophets and messengers, and have refused to accept their righteous calls while preventing others from doing so. Also, most of the savage massacres which occurred during the bloody world wars arose from the conceit and arrogance of hard-hearted leaders. Most conceited individuals are delinquents who were brought up in unstable homes and were

able to obtain position in the society. These people attempt to imagine an exalted character for themselves and endeavor to express their acquired imaginative honor by displaying conceit and arrogance. It is readily possible for all people to encounter this type of individual wherever they may be.

A distinguished person who enjoys realistic honor and dignity, does not feel the need to be arrogant with others because he realizes that neither conceit nor arrogance can offer a person real respect. He also understands that these features do not qualify any individual for an authentic character.

According to a psychologist's advice:

"Limit your hopes and wishes, reduce your expectations and anticipations, free yourselves from lusts and desires. Distant yourselves from conceit and arrogance, and avoid imaginative limitations to guarantee yourselves a safer and longer lasting peace.

Our Leaders and Modesty

One of the excellent morals which can be considered as a symbol of love and the best path of achieving it is modesty. By performing their duties towards their societies by practicing good manners, modest individuals promote their social dignity and extend the amount of their love in people's hearts.

Nevertheless, we must recognize the vast difference between modesty and self-abasement, for modesty is a manifestation of a noble trait of a great and self-confident character, while self-abasement arises from moral lowliness and loss of self-confidence.

Luqman (A.S.) as the Qur`an says, warned his son against conceit:

"And do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch; surely Allah does not love any self-conceited boaster". Qur`an 18:18

Imam Ali (A.S.) said:

"Had Allah permitted conceit for any of His worshippers, He would have permitted it to His nearest Prophets and Awlia; but He, Glory be to Him, made them resent conceit and accepted modesty for them. They, therefore, cast their cheeks to the ground, threw dust on their faces (in prostration), and were modest with the believers."

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) used to say:

"Avoid conceit, for a worshipper insists on conceit until Allah, Glory be to Him, says write My worshipper among the arrogant".

Nahj al-Fasãhah p. 12

Imam Sadiq (A.S.) pointed out the spiritual root of conceit in a short statement when he said: "There is not a man who goes astray save as a result of the lowliness he finds in himself."

Al-Kafi v.3, p. 461

According to Dr. M. Brid:

“The arrogance of an individual or a nation over another equals the humiliation of that individual or nation. Most of the arguments and disagreements which take place today arise from the feeling of lowliness. Hence, adopting the idea of conceit is not but an attempt to fulfill the space which a conceited individual feels in his life. There is not a man, a nation, a class, a race, a people, or otherwise with clear conscience that feel distinction between themselves and others.” ‘Uqdae Hiqarat

Conceited and arrogant persons always look at their words and actions with exaltation and acceptance. Furthermore, they consider their shortcomings as good deeds. Imam Musa ibn Ja’far (A.S.) explains this:

“Conceit is on several degrees among which is the evil actions of a man are embellished to him so that he sees them as good, hence he believes that he does good.”

Wasa’il ash-Shia v. I, p.74

Also according to a psychologist:

“Conceited individuals consider their shortcomings as virtues and their flaws as merits. For example, they consider their sudden anger with others as proof of their forceful personalities, their weakness as manifestation of their excellent and sensitive spirituality, their overweight ness as a sign of health. Actually healthy reasons lie in healthy bodies, and dependence on the weak is an idea for they are easily irritated and are unpredictable.”

Ravankavi

Let us now review some of the Guardian of the Faithful’s (A.S.) statements in this regard:

“Avoid conceit or the number of those who resent you will increase.”

Ghu’rar al-Hikam p. 147

“Conceit ruins the mind.”

Ghurar al-Hikam p. 28

According to psychologists, conceited people suffer from weakness of the mind.

Imam Ali (A.S.) also said:

“He whose mind is weakened, his pride is strengthened.”

Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 651

“Modesty is the ultimate of reasoning; and conceit is the peak of ignorance.”

Ghurar al-Hikam p. 102

He also said:

“Conceit is a concentrated illness.”

Ghurar al-Hikam p. 678

and:

“He who admires his condition comes short of cursing his abilities.”

Ghurar al-Hikam p. 678

Dr. H. Shakhter said:

“One of the methods of attracting people’s attention to us when we are feeling disappointed or unsuccessful is to glorify and exalt ourselves, and imagine the things which we hope for as already occurring and giving ourselves by bragging about the times at which we were successful in the past or by exaggerating to others.

“Conceited people lure themselves into accepting the false embellishments of their fabrications, thus depriving themselves of any opportunity for change.”
Rushde Shakhsiyyat

Such people are unable trealize that there are flaws in them and perfection or a success in others.
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
One who is satisfied with himself, his shortcomings are concealed from him: and had he recognized other’s precedence it would suffice for his flaws and failure.
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 95

Islam, which calls for an exalted human civilization and that which allows man to live an honorable life, invalidated all abnormal distinctions. Islam recognizes the trait of purity and piety.
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
‘Seek refuge in Allah from the intoxication of wealth, for surely it has a distant solemnity.”
Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 138

One day wealthy man came to visit the Messenger of’ Allah (S.A.W.). While the wealthy man was there, a poor man entered and sat near him; upon this the wealthy man collected his clothes and moved away from the poor man. The Prophet (S.A.W.) noticed this and said: “What! Do you fear that his poverty will spread to you?”

In conclusion, if conceited persons seek happiness, they are to rid themselves of this illness and liberate themselves from such a trait which violates their realistic character; otherwise they will face an inevitable disappointment and deprivation which are matters to be avoided.

10

OPPRESSION.

The Role of Justice in Society The Destructive Flames of Oppression The Role of Religion in Fighting Oppression and the Oppressors

The Role of Justice in Society

A Study of the history of revolutions shows important factors worthy of reflecting upon, on

which the basis of uprisings and revolutions around the world and between various nations were built. That factor is no other than justice. Many times this word awakened the souls of those whose lives were filled with deprivation, whose rights and honor were encroached upon. The oppressed revolted against the organs of evil, and endeavored to achieve the precious gems of freedom and justice by eradicating the unjust beasts. In most cases the oppressed were willing to sacrifice their lives in the hope of wiping our oppression.
It is unfortunate to say the great majority of revolutions and uprisings were unable to reach their sacred goals, nor did the revolutionaries achieve their hopes of eradicating pain from their lives.
The secret behind their failure becomes apparent with a little reflection on an important issue. That is to say that a society which looses track of the natural course of development and becomes accustomed to failure and backwardness, will be unable to bear a just system and will be unable to tolerate just order. Establishing justice is only possible in appropriate atmospheres, without which justice has no chance of appearing on the horizons of life.
A just law is a basic requirement for any social structure. A just law guarantees the rights of all classes and individuals in accordance with the welfare of the public, accompanied by behavioral implementation of its various codes.
Justice is a natural law observed in all corners of the universe. Allah, the Almighty, decreed the outline of the world to be dependent on justice, so that it cannot be violated in any possible manner. The astonishing and precise harmonies which exist between the different organs of our bodies are amongst most obvious manifestations of the accurate law of justice in this universe. By observing ourselves we can initiate the understanding of the rest of the universe thereof.
The balance which rules the universe is compulsory in the meaning that it is instinctive. Because man was given the freedom of will and thought, it becomes his duty to establish the pillars of justice in his society. It is true that in some instances, the reasoning power in man needs legislative guidance, but at times it can also do without it: for men realize many facts independently. In some cases, reason can pass judgment as to the goodness or incorrectness of an affair.
Justice enjoys a sensitive position in man's life, for it is a source of all noble traits. In other words, justice is a motive behind excellent conduct. It also is an element that creates harmony and serenity between human societies. In fact, justice is an essential step towards uniting societies in the path of righteousness.
Plato, the famous Greek philosopher, said:
"If justice finds its way into man's spirit, the bright rays will light all his spiritual powers; because all noble traits and human morals arise from the spring of justice. It grants man the ability to best perform his personal works, which is the ultimate happiness of man and the peak of his closeness to the Almighty Creator."
It is safe enough to say that justice is the basic element in organized social life. With justice a new chapter of life is opened, societies find new spirit in them, and it lights the human life with glory and beauty. A society where life enjoys the beauty of justice finds the necessities of life, and therefore overcomes all its problems.

The Destructive Flames of Oppression

The role of oppression in destroying societies, ruining behavior, and violating social security is undisputable. Even the individuals who aren't adherent to religion cannot deny this fact. Oppression causes dissension and the devastation of public relations in society. Practicing evil and arrogant powers closes the pages in history of powerful governments and destroys their civilizations.
There are great morals in the lives of the oppressors. For example, Muhammad ibn Abdul Malik enjoyed a special place among the Abbaside caliphates. This minister had an iron oven made, the inside of which was covered with sharp reeds. When a political prisoner was brought to him, he would put the innocent person inside it and light the flames until the soul of that person departed his body.
When al-Mutawakil reached the office of caliph, he ordered Ibn Malik to be placed in his own prison. Near his death the latter wrote poetry to the affect that in this world he who does something shall be punished for it. When al-Mutawakil read the poetry he ordered him freed, but by the time that the royal decree reached the prison, Ibn Malik was dead in a terrible condition in his own oven.
Muruj adh-Dhahab v.4,p. 88
Indeed, those who claim that life is just a day to day struggle for survival, constantly attempt to destroy the weak with the pressure of deprivation; hoping by doing so to strengthen their power and protect their position. They will commit any crime no matter how inhuman in order to satisfy themselves. But as the days pass, the flames of anger rage in the hearts of the oppressed, who inflict great calamities on the lives of the tyrant.
Oppression, however, is not limited to certain positions or classes. Any person in any position who intentionally or unintentionally attempts to exploit life of others for his own sake, of tries to go beyond the limits of the laws of reason or legislation can be classified as an oppressor. Unfortunately, today oppression has reached its peak; the flames of oppression and injustice rage through various classes of societies and threaten the structure of human civilizations with sure destruction. The agents of oppression abuse the rights of human societies and rob them of their resources and wealth with every available means, while the statute of justice appears helpless.

The Role of Religion in Fighting Oppression and the Oppressors

The Holy Qur`an announced the inevitable severe punishment of oppressors when Allah the Almighty said:
"And (as for) these towns, We destroyed them when they acted unjustly and We have appointed a time for their destruct ion."
(18:59).

The leaders of religion have all believed in the continuity of human society, therefore they

made the establishment of justice their main goal in life. Whenever they noticed disarray in human development, they endeavored to change such disarray by revolting against the oppressors misconduct. In many cases, the leaders were able to overpower and eradicate the oppressors.
According to the Holy Qur`an, the conduct of the leaders of religion is an important factor in awakening people against oppression:
“Certainly We sent Our apostles with clear arguments. and sent down with themthe book and the balance that men may conduct themselves with equity.”
(57: 25)
Since the ultimate goal of Islam is collective justice, it commands all its adherents to implement justice and equality fully amongst them and others regardless of titles or personal considerations. It also prohibits oppression and depriving any group of people of their rights.
“O you who believe! Be upright for Allah bears Witness With justice and let not hatred Of a people incite you not to act equitable; act equitably, that is nearer to piety.’’
(Qur`an 5: 8)

And:

“And that when you judge between people you judge with justice..”
(Qur`an 4:58)

Islam gives special importance to justice in that it disqualifies unjust individuals from occupying the position of judge, even if he enjoys all other qualifications. Islam has also made it the duty of the parents to observe justice between their children, so as to condition them to accepting this vital trait and refuse oppression and enmity. Besides, one of the bases for bringing up children is to be just in all circumstances when dealing with them, for when they witness oppression being applied in the father/mother relationship they can not be expected to be just or fair in their conduct with others. If children are exposed to oppression it grows into their natures, thus they become destructive elements in society. The acquired unfairness will eventually affect their societies, or further move their parents.
The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) brought the attention of his followers to this important point when he said:
“Be just to your children with gifts if you would like them to be just to you in kindliness.”
Nahj al -Fasãhah p. 66

Professor Bertrand Russell said:
“The human spirit is like a stream, constantly expanding. And, the purpose of an adequate upbringing is to make external pressure appear in the form of thought, habits and affection, not in the form of torture or punishment. The idea needed here is the matter that we have to gradually implement in the minds and habits of children.
“The correct method of teaching children justice is possible when children associate with others. The competition which takes place among children over toys which can be used by

only one person at a time (bicycles) can bring us hope of teaching them justice. It is amazing how children abandon their selfishness when the oldest child displays justice by offering his toy to other children. At first I did not believe that justice was a natural or instinctive human feelings, I was surprised to find that the sense of justice can easily be brought about in children When training children, it is essential to implement truthful justice. In other words, not to prefer any child over another. If you love one more than the others, be mindful not to let your preference adversely influence the distribution of happiness and felicity between them.

“It is a generally accepted practice to grant children toys of the same quality.

‘‘Any attempt to invalidate children’s want of justice, in any manner, is a mistaken one. On Education The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said: “Fear Allah and be just between your children as you like them to be kind to you. Nahj aI-Fasahah Imam Ali (A.S.) wrote the following advice to Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr when he appointed him as the governor of Egypt: “The Divine ambassadors arc the true establishers of justice in society. They are the ones who have planned the course of human perfection for mankind.” Imam Husain (A.S.) also manifested the true meaning of justice and human belief when he rose against oppression. The pages of history still shine on the story of this man’s life as it will be forever.

11

ENMITY AND HATRED

Why Should We Not Forgive? Setbacks Caused by Enmity Imam Sajjad’s Reaction to Those Who Mistreated Him

Why Should We Not Forgive?

Man undoubtedly cannot avoid society and live in seclusion. He is a dependent creature whose needs know no limit. The fact that man is socially dependent conforms to his nature and needs, enabling him to live in the shadows of cooperation. Social life has various requirements that limits man to certain rules and duties on which relies success in life.
Social life, the most influential factor in the development of man’s character, may not be limited to material entities; rather social relations should be the result of a union between the souls, human relations are manifestations of such unions. If a society enjoys apparent and spiritual unity that depends on a collective union of the souls, it is virtually impossible for life to loose its beauty and serenity.
One of our basic duties in the field of relation to others is to be able to forgive the mistakes of others. This duty is dictated to us by the need for continuous human relations.
The best way to peaceful living is simply to live in peace with others.

One should not disregard the fact that no one in this world is flawless, and that people with perfectly stable and normal natures and manners are seldom found. We should also remember that even the noblest of characters are not perfectly infallible. Therefore, it is the duty of everyone to bear with unpredictable errors committed by others. In most cases, confessions are an essential part in finding everlasting and deep-rooted peace.

An old poet says that everyone's share of his time is what he has accustomed himself to. Yet, what man accustoms himself to arises from his spiritual and behavioral states. Forgiveness is an apparent manifestation of strong will and self-control which are both variations of courage and strength. Individuals who are forgiving enjoy invaluable spiritual tranquility. They inhabit strong wills and spiritual maturity which are sources of kindness; a determinative factor in freeing man from the chains of spiritual slavery. Overlooking the shortcomings of others is a heavy burden on man's nature. It is difficult for man to accept resentful characteristics; nevertheless, the more power he acquires in this field, the less he will suffer from psychological unrest. In fact, eventually he will become a mercy to the world.

Another major point regarding this is that forgiveness undoubtedly affects even the enemy's feelings, which creates speedy transformation in his thinking and conduct. There are many cases when tense relationships improved in the shadow of forgiveness; many are the cases when hatred and deep-rooted enmity changed to serenity and devoutness, and many are the cases when an enemy submitted to a man who equipped himself with kind and forgiving thoughts.

According to scholars:

"A great talent of man, that animals do not share, is forgiveness and overlooking the mistakes of others. When you are harmed by others you have a good opportunity to forgive and to enjoy the feeling of forgiveness. We were taught to forgive our enemies, but never were we asked to overlook the flaws of our fathers and friends, for it is naturally expected of everyone to forgive mistakes.

"When you seek revenge from your enemy, you place yourself in the same position as he, for you have treated him in the same manner that he has treated you, you would gain nobility if you would have forgiven him for his mistake. When we do seek revenge it is possible for that person to be more powerful than us, but when we forgive our enemy we are definitely triumphant. With forgiveness we are able to defeat our enemies without fighting, and force them to be humble towards us. Abandoning rivals and avoiding encounters with them is the best defensive method we can take against them, for their defeat is eminent.

"It is incumbent on us to be kind when others transgress, for kindness is a heavenly policy with which the earth and its dwellers can live in peace and harmony."

Setbacks Caused by Enmity

There is not a heavier burden or more dangerous behavioral or psychological disorder that inflicts man more than enmity and the act of harboring feelings of hatred against others. Hatred is one of the most disadvantageous feelings affecting man's happiness and tranquility. Hatred stems from the power of anger and destroys man's spiritual balance. When a man is angeresome reason may cause him to calm down and remove his psychological unrest by extinguishing the flames of rage in his heart.
Acts of revenge occur from the feelings of insignificance an individual may suffer from, as a result of concealed hatred from childhood trauma, or from the social environment where painful events were experienced. In other words, revenge is a method with which those who suffer from the complex of "insignificance" attempt to mend their sense of failure and humility. These people search for any possible way of harming others and will commit any crime.
Among the effective factors which help such individuals to abandon evilness is the observance of sacred goals in life. Because, he who purifies his soul and manners, and disregards all other goals, will then disregard mistreatment by others.
The extent to which we react to mistreatment by others lies in our hands. It also our choice to change the course of our thoughts; therefore, it is possible for us to willingly change the influence of various factors in strengthening ourselves in the path of eradicating the sense of revenge which pressures our souls. Nevertheless, if we ignore our moral responsibilities others will be unable to help us change our shortcomings.
Revenge takes various forms. Some people enact their foes with matters that have ill fates, pretending to guide them to devoutness and honesty. These revenge seeking people are careful plotters.
According to a western scholar:
"Hatred and enmity stem from mental instability, especially when there are no other apparent causes. We can solve most issues in brotherly manners but conceit and arrogance prevent us from doing so. We often abandon our friends and loved ones for, minor mistakes which we experience from them. Sometimes we know that they are innocent but still refuse to forgive them. I wish we were able to minimize our injustices to them.

Imam Sajjad's Reaction to Those Who Mistreated Him

The lives of religious leaders are lessons of honor, nobility, forgiveness and humanness. Their spiritual merits were manifested in practical lessons in a most magnificent picture.
One day lmam Ali ibn al-Husain as-Sajjad (A.S.) was sitting in the company of his followers when a man, who was related to him, approached and began insulting the lmam (A.S.). This man's name was at Hassan ibn al-Muthanna. Imam Ali (A.S.) ignored the man and when he had left said to his companions:
"You heard what that man said to me, I would like you to come with me to hear my reply to

him.”
The companions of Imam Ali (A.S.) then said:
“We will come with you, although we wanted you or us to say something (an equal response) to him.”
The Imam (A.S.) proceeded to the man’s home reciting:
“And those who when they commit an indecency or do injustice to their souls remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their faults: and who forgives the faults but Allah, and (who) do not knowingly persist in what the have done.’’
(3.134)

His companions hearing this concluded that the Imam (A.S.) would say only kind words to the man. The Imam (A.S.) reached al-Hassan ibn aI Muthanna’s house and said:
“Tell him this is Ali ibn al-Husain.” The man heard this and came out prepared for an encounter. He was sure that Imam Sajjad (A.S.) came only to revenge his actions. When al-Hassan al-Muthanna appeared, Imam Sajjad (A.S.) said:
“My Brother, you have come to me and have said somethings. If you have said that which truly lies in me, I seek forgiveness from Allah; and if you have accused me of that which I am innocent, I ask Allah to forgive you!!”
When the man heard the words of the Imam (A.S.) he kissed his forehead and said:
‘Indeed I accused you of that which you are innocent of. These words describe me.”
Irshad al-Mufid p. 257

The words of lmam Sajjad (A.S.) affected the spirit of this man, they relieved him of his pain arid made apparent to him the gestures of sorrow and repentance.
The Imam taught the lessons of forgiveness and overlooking the mistakes of others to his companions. He also demonstrated the happy repentance which the man experienced as a result of forgiveness.
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“The lack of forgiveness is the ugliest of all flaws, and haste in seeking revenge is the greatest sin.

Ghurar al-Hikam p. 768

The Holy Qur`an has always advised Muslims to be forgiving:
“And let not those of you who possess grace and abundance swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have fled in Allah’s way, and they should pardon and turn away. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (24: 22)

Allah, the Almighty, also said:

“And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend”. (41.34)

When one has the power of revenge, forgiveness is a very valuable trait. Imam Sadiq (A.S.) placed it among the merits of prophets and the pious.
Safinah al-Bihar v.2, p. 702

Imam Ali (A.S.) considered forgiveness to be among the best preventive weapons against the conspiracies of evil doers:
“Reprimand your brother by performing good deeds towards him: and divert his evilness by granting him favors.”
Nahj al-Balaghah p. 115

Imam Ali (AS.) uncovered sensitive facts regarding hatred in a short yet eloquent statement. He implied that spiteful individuals are inflicted with a type of remorselessness and a lack of the sense of mercy:
“The heart which suffers most from the thirst of revenge is the heart of the spiteful.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 178

It is psychologist’s view that:
“A spiteful individual is easily angered and is a merciless foe.”

Imam Ali (A.S.) said,
“Spite incites anger.
(Ghurar al-Hikam p. 21

A psychologist also said:
“If you do not fulfill the request of the spiteful, even if it is unreasonable, he will become frustrated and never will he relax until he has sought revenge from him who did not abide by

his will."
Ravankavi

Man only obtains spiritual, conscience, and mental harmony when he erases the picture of hate from his heart.
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
"He who eradicates hatred, his heart and reason will be at ease.
Ghurar, al-Hikam p. 666

According to another psychologist:
"The more man distances himself from extravagant and overwhelming anger and hatred, the more he protects himself against nervous disorders which cause spiritual imbalance."
Selection Journal: Psychosocial Section

A lucky person is the one who purifies himself from enmity and revengefulness.
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
"A man's happiness comes when his heart is free of spite and envy.
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 399

We conclude on an important point; that is, in some instances Islam prohibits the overlooking of some actions. It is true that Islam made its goal to obtain security and order, but it also considered punishment essential when the action was an encroachment on the affairs of the society or its security. Articles of the penal code are the rights of the people that can either be practiced or abandoned by the people themselves. These codes are Allah's rights on people.

12

ANGER

Advantages Of Self-Control
The Diverse Consequences Of Anger
Guidance From The Leaders Of Religion.

Advantages of Self-Control.

There are many astonishing secrets surrounding the human being which is equipped with two great powers: reason and will. Reason is the light which specifies the fate of the human soul in this life. It is considered the representative of man's factual personality. and is a shining light that illuminates the pages of life. Therefore, without the guidance and supervision of reason we cannot advance on the ever-complex avenues of life.

Man is required to endeavor to control the various feelings which he finds in himself, thus preventing excessiveness or under estimation of these feelings. Reason is the power that demonstrates to us the reasonable method of applying healthy feelings , and from allowing the mighty lusts to lead us into obeying their orders. In reality, if the light of reason shines on our feelings' hemisphere it is then guaranteed that the rays of happiness will illuminate the heavens of our live. On the contrary, if we are enslaved by our cravings and captives of our lusts we will be weakened, which would result in our defeat in all walks of life.
As for man's will, which is one of the most influential moral factors and the strongest way of achieving good intentions and noble hopes, it has strong correlation to the basis of man's happiness. Man's will also protects his personality from the reach of filth and the lowliness of life. A strong will is a determining factor in a happy life, it allows man to resist events which can have influential consequences on his life. The more effort we implement toward strengthening this vital power, the more vigor we achieve in order to obtain moral excellence and to avoid corruption. Our souls, then, become tranquil and protected from disarray.
A western thinker commented on this subject with the following:
"'There is a beautiful definition of reason, that also implies its balance. This definition is: Reason is the organizing power. This power which like a new type of steering mechanism for cars, prevents both men and women from colliding with each other. It is a system which absorbs great shocks which result from sudden collisions or road irregularities; it offers passengers comfort and assurance even on the toughest roads."

Crimes are manifestations of unbalanced personalities. When an individual looses control over his reason; he also looses control of his will and over himself. Not only does a person, not ruled by reason lose his role as a productive element in life, but he also turns into a dangerous social member.
Anger makes man like a small stream running between mighty mountains making loud noises Noble men, who enjoy moral excellence, are like great rivers running between swamps and into seas without creating turbulence.
Rough natures need strong wills in order to prevent them from overpowering the soul; or they can force the individual to make hasty decisions at moments of pain or when under pressure, hence leading him into an unnecessary fate.

The Diverse Consequences of Anger

A psychological state which leads one's nature to divert from its natural path is anger. When it controls and besieges man, anger takes the form of arrogance and removes the barriers which prevent it from entering into man's will, hence instigating him to harm his opponent without any considerations. The veil of anger blinds the mind and can turn a man into an animal which lacks any realization of reality. This allows him to commit crimes then have everlasting consequences on his life. Yet, when he realizes his mistakes, it is usually when he faces uncalled results and falls in the hole of misery.
This evil trait leads only to sorrow, for its peak does not recede save when the "Blaming Soul" prevails, and turns the person's lowly deeds into the rage of anger thus causing him to lose his credibility with the judgment of reason and conscience. When the consequences of

the judgment of reason appear on an angered man, waves of sorrow coupled with intense pain appear in the heart. Even the body is vulnerable to the adverse consequences of anger, because it is the abode of comfort for the soul.
It should be understood that the power of anger is essential in its correct proportions. Within those proportions, anger is an element of strength and young age. The type of anger which allows man to resist oppression and defend his rights is a humanistic characteristic.
Seeking revenge, which is often associated with anger, fills life with gloominess. If we intend to treat evil with evil at all instances, and revenge from our foes by uttering impolite insults, we would have to waste most of our lives in arguments and controversies. We moreover loose the power of will and bear the humility of weakness.
Man is always subject to error and forgetfulness. Therefore, if our actions instigate someone to become angry, then the best method to obtain his forgiveness is by admitting our mistakes to him.

According to Dr. Dale Carnegie:

“If it becomes clear to us that we deserve punishment or reprehension, then isn’t it better for us to admit our mistakes? Is the reprehension which we direct at ourselves more appropriate and bearable than that which others direct at us? Thus, let us start by admitting our reprehendable actions so as to deprive our foes of their weapons. In this manner, we can guarantee up to ninety percent that we will obtain forgiveness and willingness to overlook our mistakes. Everyone can easily conceal his shortcomings, but it is a noble man who finds a unique sense of honor and pride when he willingly admits his errors; When we are sure that righteousness is on our side, it becomes incumbent on us to prepare a suitable atmosphere to win others to our side. On the other hand, if we are in error, it is our moral obligation to immediately and clearly admit so. After we admit our mistakes, not only do we obtain the excellent results of doing so, but acquire more of a sense of enjoyment than if we had sought revenge.

Man’s heart inherits the light of real happiness and waves of noble feelings from forgiveness. We even prevail over our foes and force them to submit by forgiving their mistakes. It also grants us confidence in ourselves and others, and the light of love and harmony shine from it. Forgiveness leads archenemies to harmonize with each other and overlook disagreement and dissension.
Knowledge is a mean of reducing violence and improving manners. The more a man’s circle of knowledge increases the more the horizon of this thinking increases, giving him more power to resist the traps of lusts. So he becomes patient and more forgiving.

Guidance from the Leaders of Religion

The most effective cure for the disorder known as anger is adherence to the teachings of the Prophets and Imams. The conclusions and studies conducted by physicians, psychologists and

philosophers are not totally useless, but they are not comprehensive in removing this disorder. The leaders of religion have brought our attention, through their wise words, to the dangerous consequences of anger, and the fantastic advantages of suppressing it. Imam Sadiq (A.S.) said:
“Avoid anger for it brings about reprehension.”

Dr. Mardin has elaborated on this point by saying:
“An angry man (whatever the reason for his anger) realizes the meaningless of his anger after he calms down, and in most cases he feels that he should apologize to those he has insulted. If you accustom yourselves to admitting the uselessness of anger when it occurs, you will reduce the degree of its unwanted consequences.”
Pirozi Fikr

Imam Sadiq(A.S.) has said:
“Anger is annihilation of the heart of the wise, he who can not control his anger cannot control his mind.”
Usule Kafi v.2, p. 305

Anger and the frustration which occurs as a result of it have dangerous effects on one’s health. According to health specialists anger can cause sudden death if it reaches certain levels of intensity.
Imam All (A.S.) said:
“He who does not restrain his anger, speeds his death.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 625

Dr. Mardin says:
“Do those with weak hearts realize that some frustration can cost them their lives? They may not know it, but should realize that many healthy individuals are victims of instances of intense anger which caused them to die of heart attacks.

“Anger also causes loss of appetite, indigestion, and disturbs both the muscle and the nervous systems for hours or even days. Anger adversely affects all bodily and spiritual functions of the body. Even the nursing mother’s anger can cause dangerous poisoning of her milk.”
Pirozi Fikr
Dr. Mann says:
“Scientific investigation regarding the philosophical effect on anxiety revealed changes in all the body members; the heart, veins, stomach, brain, and internal glands all change their natural course of functioning during moments of anger. Adrenalin plays the role of burning fuel in moments of anger instead of other hormones.”
Usule Ravanshinasi

Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Avoid anger, for its beginning is ludicrous, and its end is sorrow.

He also said:
“Anger is a raging fire, he who suppresses it extinguishes the fire, and hewho sets it free is the first to burn in it.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 71

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (A.S.) recommended patience as a tool for resisting anger and avoiding its harmful consequences. He said:
“Guard against the severity of anger, and equip yourselves with patience so as to counter it.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p.131

And:
“Self-control at the moments of anger safeguards you from moments of perdition.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p.. 462

It is even possible for a person to commit murder during moments of anger:
Imam Baqir (A.S.) said:
“What is more evil than anger? Surely man can be angered and in turn kill a soul which is prohibited by Allah.”
According to John Markoist:
“Some individuals (with certain psychological problems) minds encounter crime scenes as fast as cinema films. A characteristic of such patients is that in one instant they are thinking about committing a crime and the next they have committed it without hesitation. They are, in other words, instant killers.” Chi Midanam.
The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) commanded the following at moments of anger:
“...Therefore, if one of you finds some of this (anger) in himself, if he is standing he should sit, and if he was sitting he should lay down. If he is still angry, he should perform ablution with cold water or bath, for fire can only be extinguished with water.”
Ihyä’ al- Ulum v.2, p. 151

Dr. Victor Pashi says:
“If a child gets frustrated without you harshly reprehending him, you can suppress his anger by washing him with cold water or wrapping him in a wet or damp cloth.”
Rahi Khoshbakhti

Dr. C. Robbin has also said:
“Cleanliness of the body has great effect on behavior. Bathing with warm water every morning and evening cleans and relaxes the body and removes boredom and the loss of appetite. It also suppresses any anger which might have been caused by the daily routine. Thus, we may stress the importance of it for the body and for the mind.”
Chi Midanam.

As we have previously stated, the leaders of religion have set great examples for us in the following story which was narrated by Ibn Ashoub in his book.
Mubarad and Ibn Aisha narrated that a man from Syria saw lmam Hassan (A.S.) riding a

horse and started insulting him. Imam Hassan (A.S.) did not reply to the man. When the Syrian stopped, Imam Hassan (A.S.) proceeded towards him and after cheerfully greeting him said:
"Old man, I believe you are a stranger. Maybe you have confused me with another person. If you ask forgiveness, it is granted to you. If you ask for a means of transportation, we shall provide it for you. If you are hungry, we shall feed you. If you are in need of clothes, we shall cloth you. If you are deprived, we shall grant you. if you are being sought, we shall give you refuge. if you have any need, we shall fulfill it for you. And if you wish to proceed with your caravan be our guest until you leave, it would be more useful to you, for we hold a good position, great dignity and vast belongings."

When the man heard the words of al-Hassan he cried and said:
"I testify that you are Allah's heir on His earth. Allah surely knows to whom He assigns His Message. You and your Father were the most resented of Allah's creatures to me, but now you are the most beloved of Allah's creatures to me.

The man then directed his caravan and became their guest of the town until he departed while believing in their love.
al-Manaqib v.4, p. 19

13

BREACH OF PROMISE

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Various Responsibilities.

Man comes to realize his responsibilities only when he reaches the stage of distinguishing between right and wrong. It is then that he can bear to observe the commands of the system of life and adhere to the chain of decisive decisions on which man's happiness and integrity depend. In other words, he is able to create harmony between his behavior and his bodily and spiritual needs.
Performing one's material and spiritual responsibilities is a necessity attested to by both reason and conscience, which call on man to steadfastly pursue advancement, and condemn such factors that cause disturbances in the system of living. Performing one's responsibilities plays a great role in furthering good manners and spirituality. Despite some beliefs,

responsibility is not slavery but real freedom. Responsibility draws for man the behavioral order that conforms to the most adequate system of living. Man's responsibilities exist as long as man exists but in varying forms. It is only appropriate to expect a person to fulfill his responsibilities if he is able and willing to do so.
Irresponsibility and violation of the rules is just ignorance of the fundamentals of life and an introduction to misery and destruction. There is not a greater mistake than carelessness about members of society. Therefore, we must prevent the process of eliminating individual duties for the sake of fulfilling our lusts. People who are captives of their own lusts prefer their own wishes and personal interests over their duties, which is the root of their failure and inability to reach human integrity at all.
According to Dr. Carl:
"A man who considers himself free to do anything is not like an eagle that roams the endless heavens but is like a runaway dog that finds himself in the middle of a street crowded with cars. This man can be compared to the dog that does whatever its cravings dictate, yet the man is more misguided than the dog for he does not know where to go or how to rid himself of the many dangers that surround him.

"We all agree that nature is subjected to certain laws. We must also realize that man's life must contain a sequence of laws and regulations. We imagine ourselves as being totally independent of nature, and do whatever we wish. We do not want to admit that controlling our lives is not any different than driving cars from the viewpoint that both need adherence to certain rules. It is as if we think that the real goal for man is to eat, drink, sleep have sexual intercourse, and own a car, radio, etc..."

Obeying the rules is essential for human society, and this cannot be done without constantly observing the rules. Those who rely on their personal abilities can observe the facts of life with the light of reason and logic; and therefore, can bear to under-take various duties. They organize their lives according to the fundamentals of righteousness and truth and accept their duties without complaining. If a person fails in anyway, he still can find reason to be proud, for such failure comes not but after fulfilling his responsibilities.
We must search for happiness in real felicity. Felicity together with tranquility provide those who adhere to the calls of their conscience with success. The reward of those who observe their responsibilities is self-confidence and the harmony of both the mind and the conscience. This comforting feeling stems from the soul of those who carry out their responsibilities in life.

The Importance of Vows and Disadvantages of Violating Them

One of man's vital duties in life is observing his vows. It is man's nature to feel resentful for violating his vows and to feel satisfaction and goodness when fulfilling them in both individual and social cases, regardless of his religion. The fundamentals on which a person is

brought up play a tremendous role in his future conduct. Thus, the necessity of an adequate upbringing and the development of its fruitfulness, and refraining from the things which damage man's nature become readily obvious. Proper upbringing is the key to behavioral perfection.

Morality deems it necessary to observe and respect all verbal vows (agreements) that are contracted between parties, even it they lack legal guarantees. Violation of vows is considered as abandoning the rules of honor and dignity.

According to Buzarjumehr:

"The violation of vows isolates honor."

He who diverts himself from the right path by violating his vows (agreements) plants the seeds of refusal and resentment in the hearts of others. Eventually the violator's actions will bring shame on him, hewill then attempt to cover up his actions beneath excuses and contradictions and finally the people who know this person will see that he is a misguided hypocrite.

Violation of oaths is surely among the most active elements in creating social dissention and weakening ties between people. Undoubtedly, a society that is overwhelmed by dissention and mistrust will eventually loose the balance of its social life and as a result its members will not be able to trust anyone not even the closest of relatives.

There is a type of individual who is not only careless about keeping his promises but he considers treason (betrayal of trust) to be cleaver and good management; these people even brag about their actions to others.

Fulfilling promises is essential for a person who wishes to live a social life; it is the basis for social happiness, development, and success.

It is narrated that a group of Khawarij were captured during the time of Hajjaj, who reviewed their cases and sentenced them as he wished. When the last man was standing in front of Hajjaj waiting for his sentence, time for prayer arrived. Hajjaj heard the call for prayer and turned the prisoner over to a noble and told him to bring him back in the morning. The noble man left the palace with the prisoner. As they were walking the prisoner said: "I am not one of the Khawarij. I ask Allah by His Mercy to prove my innocence, for I am an innocent hostage in their hands. I ask you to let me spend the night with my wife and children so I can leave my will with them. I promise that I will return before the roaster crows in the morning."

After a moment of silence, the noble man agreed to the man's insistence and permitted him to go home for the night. A short time later the noble man fell victim to his fear and imagined that he would be the subject of Hajjaj's fury. That night the man woke up terrified and was astonished to hear the prisoner, who he had given permission to go home, knocking at his door as he had promised. This noble man was overwhelmed with surprise and could not help but exclaim:

"Why have you come to my door'?"

The prisoner replied: "He who recognizes Allah's greatness and power, and makes Him a witness to his oath, must fulfill his promise.

The noble man proceeded with the prisoner to the palace of Hajjaj, and narrated to him the complete story. Hajjaj, who is known for his ruthlessness, was so moved by the man's

honesty that he allowed him to go free.
Now suppose that a commercial establishment disregarded its commitment in fulfilling its duties and regulations. Would this behavior lead anywhere but down, for the establishment would lose its credibility among the people.
There is not a more stabilizing factor than exchanged trust between members of a society. Interpersonal relations would not become stable, nor would trust become manifested in any society unless everyone gave as much importance to their verbal commitments as he does to his official and legal contracts. For example, a merchant should transfer goods on time to his clients, a borrower should pay his debts to his lenders.. .etc. It is then that disputes can be eliminated, and life can reach its ultimate goal.
It is essential for a person to review his capabilities before making any promises, and to refrain from commitments that are outside his reach. Even if a person cannot fulfill his promises or meet his commitments he is responsible for them. Thus, if a person is not careful of what he says, he makes himself subject to blame and criticism.

Islam Prohibits Breach of Promises

Man is bound to behave reasonably so as to be considered a human being. The success of human societies is totally dependent upon the unity of its members. Therefore, it is of special importance that every person conduct his life according to the fundamentals of truth and righteousness, and wholeheartedly endeavors to refrain from any action that may cause dissention or disunity. Furthermore, if the sanctity of oaths and promises stem from one’s faith and morality they are more likely to be observed. Islam so greatly condemns the violation of promises that it has made it illegal and unethical for its followers to violate their oaths even if they were made with tyrants and desolates. Imam Baqir (A.S.) said: “There are three affairs for which Allah gave no license (permission to violate): Conveyance of trust to both the righteous and the fallacious; Fulfillment of promises to both the righteous and the fallacious; And kindness to the parents whether they are righteous or sinful.” al-Kafi v.2, p. 162 The Holy Qur`an describes the believers in the following way: “And those who are keepers of their trusts and their covenants.” 23: 8 Furthermore, the Messenger of Allah (S.A. W.) counted breach of promises among the signs of hypocrisy. He said: “There are four traits that if one possess he is considered a hypocrite. If one of them is found in a person he has the characteristics of hypocrite unless he abandon it: (The four characteristics are) He who lies when he speaks; He who breaks his promises; He who betrays when he makes a vow; and He who erupts when he quarrels (with someone).”
Bihar al-Anw’är v. 15, p. 234

Imam Ali (A.S.) wrote the following to Malik Al Ashtar:
“Refrain from bragging to your subjects about your kindness (to them), and from preferring yourself (as governor) to your subjects, or to promise them and follow your promises with betrayal: for bragging thwarts kindness, preference conceals the light of righteousness, and betrayal deserves Allah’s and people’s resentment. Allah. Glory be to Him, said: it is a great resentment to Allah that you say that which you do not do:”
Mustadrak a!- Wasâ’il v.2, p.85
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Fulfillment (of promises) is twin to truthfulness, and I know of no shield better than (truthfulness).”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 228

Islam gives special importance to the raising of children. It has clarified to parents their moral duties towards their children through strict and comprehensive commands. Unless parents perform their duties in accordance to these moral principles, they cannot teach their children to adherence to moral excellence.
This is because actions speak louder than words. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) prohibited men from breaking promises to their children. He said:
“And a man shall not make a promise to his child and not fulfill it.’’
Nahj al -Fasähah p. 201

Dr. Alindi said:
“A sixteen old boy who robbed a car every day was brought to me for treatment. I discovered that when the boy was seven or eight years old, his father had forced him to give his toy to an aristocrats daughter, for whom his father worked. That toy, to the boy, represented an ultimate dream for he had worked hard to get it. The boy’s father promised to buy a substitute toy but had unintentionally forgot. The hopeless boy sought revenge by stealing a piece of candy from his father’s pocket. A day later the boy broke into a house and stole some items.

“It was not difficult to treat the boy when he was brought to me. It is possible that the boy would have come to be a dangerous criminal if he was not properly treated. But now his chances of becoming a reasonable and self-confident individual are much greater.’
Ma Wa Farzandane Ma

Imam Ali (A.S.) emphasizes the way one should behave with his friends. He said:
“If you adopt an intimate friend, be his servant and grant him authentic faith and true sincerity.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p.. 223

Only people who possess excellent qualities and good morals are eligible for love and

relationships.
The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
“The happiest among people is he who associates with kind people; he who does not oppress people when he deals with them; he who when he speaks does not lie; and he who when lie promises does not betray. He is of those whose valor is perfected, whose justness is manifest, and whose brotherhood is essential.”

According to Dr. Smiles:
“When you associate with spiritual people who possess noble traits, you feel an invincible power calling your souls and manners to excellence and majesty. Friendship with those who holstrong reason, noble traits, and more experience is a very valuable matter for such a relationship gives an opportunity to achieve high spirits, teach us new ways of appropriate behavior and direct our views about others to the righteous paths.” Associating with kind people teaches us goodness and kindness, for good manners are like a light which lights that which is around it and all that is near it. In conclusion, all men should know their responsibilities towards vows and promises.

14

TREACHERY

Mutual Trust and Performing Duties

Mutual trust is an essential element for the survival of a healthy and united society. A society is considered happy and tranquil if the relations between its members are based on trust. Thus, if people violate the borders of their duties and become disloyal to other’s rights, they then start to descend on the slope of social destruction.
There are various laws which rule mankind’s different affairs. Every man has his share of these laws which he is compelled by reason, nature and religion to follow. The purpose of these laws is to manifest the lights of trust and harmony in man’s life. Without these laws man would ignore or become careless about his debt to Allah and society. Man, as a social being, has no choice but to interact with his atmosphere; hence, creating countless social relationships. As a result of these relationships a chain of rights and duties stem. These rights and duties safeguard society from dissention, and pave the way for solving any possible problems which naturally occur with any relationship.
Regardless of the difficulty and inevitable sacrifices which come with social duties, they must be fulfilled in order to grant man comfort and happiness. Yes, it is in mans nature to seek happiness and wish to do so without bearing any hardships, but he must realize that happiness

cannot happen be simply performing his duties towards the children of his kind. It was once said that:
"Happiness is the reward for performing one's duties."
Not only is the happiness of a society more important than individual happiness, but individual happiness is totally reliant on social tranquility. It is also clear that treason of social rights violates the spirit of social justice and create disorder in the social system. It is every man's responsibility to respect the lives and freedom of others.
Those who accustom themselves to the serious fulfillment of their duties and take their obligations to Allah and society seriously, add to the happiness of others and help them succeed in their affairs. They also acquire the trust of others and triumph in the field of life.
Dr. S. Smiles says:
"Duties are man's debts. He who intends to upkeep himself from discreditable and immoral values in the eyes of others must pay off his debt. Yet, such actions can only be performed by continuous and serious struggle. Undertaking one's duties is the principal matter which occupies man from the first day he enters this world until the day on which he departs it.

"Consequently, the more power and capabilities one possesses, the more he is required to perform his duties; for man is like a clerk whose duty is to serve children of his kind. This duty is based on the love of justice and is not only an ideological obligation but, also a basic necessity of man's life. Yet, both traits manifest their affects in his words and actions.
"The sense of responsibility is a great talent of nations; and a nation has hope of success if its members enjoy the noble sense of responsibility with conceit, arrogance and selfishness. This type of action deserves only condolences, for nature will deem it unfit to continue to survive sooner or later."

Treachery and its Faults

No one doubts that there are many factors which greatly influence the spread of corruption. When a thorough investigation is carried out regarding the factors which cause immorality and social lowliness, it becomes evident that the most influential factor of all is the prevalence of treason on men's minds and reasons. We also discover that the danger which is inflicted on society from treachery and its devastating effects on social spirituality, exceed all other factors.
Treachery makes man's spirit gloomy and leads his thoughts and affections to misguidance and total loss. This threat arises from the prevalence of lusts, when evil thoughts dictate acceptance of lowliness, and humiliation instead of receiving inspirations from reason and faith.
Everyone needs others to trust in him. A worker or a merchant can make some material gains through various types of treachery, and perhaps he may be able to conceal his plots and fabrication for a short period of time, but one day the matter will be uncovered causing him to loose his credibility which is his main capital. He also will tarnish the dignity of his social

class by such actions. The treacherous people live in constant fear. They fear anxiety and instability and are usually pessimists.
It is a given fact that public tranquility and order depend on public security. Since the insecurity and deadly anxiety which batters the social environment is caused by treachery, it threatens the essence of social life. Indeed, where there is no security from treason there can be no freedom, brotherhood, or humanity.

Treason is not limited to certain affairs, but comprehends all of man's actions. When we examine words, and/or deeds we discover precise and vivid limits to it, and if anyone slightly strays from such borders he abandons trustworthiness and enters the field of treachery and falsehood.
It is reported that a great man gave the following advise to his son:
"Son, be poor and deprived while people become rich and wealthy from treachery and betrayal. Live without fame and position and let people reach high positions by insistence and struggle. Bear with pain, exhaustion, and deprivation and let people reach their goals and hopes by bragging and solicitation. Refrain from association with the prominent to whom people compete to be close to. Adopt the garment of piety and morals until your hairs turn gray, but never let gloomy shame tarnish you. Then thank your Lord and submit to Him with an innocent heart and an optimistic conscience."

Honesty is man's capital in life. People trust and rely on the honest which allows him (the honest) to lead a clean and honorable life. When we rely on the honest, we observe honesty in every sector of life and may reach many conclusions and have many learning experiences; hence advancing in life feeling secure and happy.

Religion Condemns Treason

"Be not unfaithful to Allah and the apostle, nor be unfaithful to your trusts while you know." 8:27 "Surely Allah commands you to Allah, the Almighty, referred to the laws which He legislated for His creatures as "The Trust". He, Glory be to Him, also warned against treachery in many instances in the Holy Qur`an: make over trusts to their owners." 4. 58 The Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (A.S.) said: "The worst from of treachery is betraying the intimate and faithful (friend), and breach of promises." Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 50 He is also quoted as saying: "The worst of people is he who believes not in trust and refrains not from treachery." Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 446 And: "Avoid treason for it is the worst of sins; surely the treacherous will be tortured in the fire for their treason." Ghurar al-Hikam p. 150
lmam Sadiq(A .S.)advised one of his a companions:
"Never say farewell to us without advising us of two traits: Adhere to uttering the truth, and convey trusts to both the righteous and sinful for they (the two traits) are the key to sustenance.
Safinah al-Bihar v.1, p. 41

Islam calls all people to a stable and happy life under the rule of performing assigned duties according to its exalted commands. It also stressed the importance of conveying trusts.

Imam Sadiq (A.S.) said:
“Adhere to conveyance of trusts. For, by Him Who sent Muhammad (SAW.) as a righteous Prophet, even if the one who killed my Father entrusted me with the sword he used kill him. I would give it back to him.
Amali as-Saduq p. 149.

There is no consideration in Islam for the treacherous. Under certain circumstances it even legislates the amputation of the hand of he who embezzles the property of Muslims. Islam severely implements the penal law against the treacherous so as to protect the social rights and preserve public safety. This procedure places the sense of responsibility in society, and helps bring about a righteous community.
Every wrong done has its bad consequences in this world and the hereafter, in addition to being a factor in the downfall of humanity.

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
“He who does evil shall be punished for it in this world.”
Nahj a1-Fasahah

According to Dr. Rose Keen:
“Every error I made in my life will stand in my way and deprive me of happiness, it will distract my understanding and realization. The opposite is also true; every attempt, truth, or righteous act accompanies and motivates me to reach all goals and hopes.”

The Mechanical Theory which says that:
“Action and reaction are equal” applies to behavioral psychology too. Good and bad actions have equal opposite affects on individuals and those who surround or imitate them.
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Conveyance of trusts is the title of the true believers.”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 453

Faith is the spirit’s defensive weapon. It is one of the more important factors which can reach deep to the soul, it organizes man’s deeds and conduct with precise order. Faith also re-establishes the sense of individual and social responsibility, warns man against the influence of social corruption, and guides society to righteousness and truth.
Faith prevents corruption and treachery. It holds parents responsible for paving the way for their children to live happy lives by carefully examining their children’s early habits, implementing faith in their hearts and supporting praiseworthy traits in them.

Imam Zain al-Abideen (A.S.) said:
“You are responsible for him to whom you are granted guardianship; his manners, guidance to his Lord, Glory be to Him, and helping him to obey (his Lord).”

Dr. Raymund Peach said:

“lt is not sufficient to generally adhere to the rules of religion. For only constant and precise attention to every detail regarding the children’s behavioral conduct and emotions in relation to religion can be enough to implement faith in their hearts. Implement the fundamentals of religion and its exalted holdings in their pure and kind hearts which are ready to receive your advise and admonition. Do that without the added restriction to religion. This will protect their faith and confidence and guard them from straying and destruction.”

Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“Surely in men of reason there is a need for moral as much as crops need rain.”
Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 224

Dr. C. Robbin said:
“Some may dispute the fact that manners like walking and talking are natural actions. In other words, they are among the initial matters which we learn in life.
“It should be known that reason does not help man to learn good manners; rather, manners rule man before he realizes the importance of them, prior to any signs of mental maturity. In other words, manners are not dependant on reason but are advantageous to them. I therefore, feel bad when I hear a mother saying about her son’s behavior: ‘He will grow to learn the right thing.’ If children do not get used to good manners (behavior) at a young age they will be unable to acquire them by reason and understanding. Yes, we can say that manners are the practical reason which guides us and opens the gates to the shortest way to righteousness. This practical reason protects us from idleness in the same way that it opposes extravagant lusts and cravings, reason guards us against enmity, hatred and resentment. In other words, it makes us sociable and warns us against ignoring others and selfishness.
“Well-mannered individuals are never lonely; they can represent societies and help awaken people to the truth.”
Chi Madanam

Despite all attempts being made to legislate strict laws to reduce crimes of treachery and the educational programs to make people aware of their consequences, and despite the many judicial and administrative establishments that fight treachery, treacherous acts are constantly increasing in number and are becoming a horrifying fact.

15

MISERL INESS

Cooperation and Assistance Miserliness Annihilates Affections A Glance at Leaders Views on Miserliness.

Cooperation and Assistance

Naturally every man has special talents and we need the cooperation of others in order to perfect and make our talents productive. Cooperation is an effective element in the process, advancement and success of both the individual and his society.
Allah created man as a social being; therefore it is in man's nature to participate with the children of his kind in the task of solving the problems of life.
Both natural events and desire create a number of problems for man; hence subjecting him to various types of difficulties where he is in constant need of help from others. In light of this natural law, people's duties are not limited to any one individual but are spread to different social classes. Aiding an individual, no matter how small and minor the task may be it is very advantageous to the development of society and fulfills one of its needs.
Since social states are manifested in members of the society from many points, we may compare the social structure to the human body. For just as the human body consists of various members that are naturally related to each other and on which the survival of man relies, society also consists of different parts which make it whole. Thus, each member of a society should know his vital basic duties and perform them to the best of his ability so that society can flourish. The members should explore all their material and spiritual talents, and exploit them for the sake of his society, all the time remembering to keep in the framework of abilities and social rule.
Nevertheless, collective tranquility and security for the society, and overcoming difficulties can be achieved only if a sense of cooperation prevails over people's relations with each other. Life is sweeter, actions are fruitful, and the wagon of society advances on the path of excellence, only with cooperation.

Miserliness Annihilates Affections

There are certain feelings which originate deep in the hearts of men, the fruits of these feelings being invaluable; these are the roots of man's cooperation. These feelings which are manifested in helping needy individuals, are among the special spiritual and excellent traits of man. These are feelings that make man react when he sees pain or suffering that the another experiences; inspiring him to offer all types of sacrifices and over looking personal wants for the sake of reducing the pain of others. Man does this without expecting any reward.

Dr. Carl said:
"Advancement in any field needs a certain degree of sacrifice, greatness, and sincerely; purity of the soul can be achieved only by sacrificing material gains and fame for the sake of one's country or a greater goal.

"Self-sacrifice is the habit of those who understand the beauty of righteousness and truly believe in Allah. These are the people who sacrifice their souls in order to implement justice, love and harmony all over the world.

“Reason alone does not lead man to perfection. Love and affection are also important factors in this field. This is true because the soul excels through feelings more than it does through reason and reflection.
“Everyone can advance on this path passing the clouds into peak of light and reach the truth.”

There is a characteristic that may destroy the roots of affection, which can conceal itself in man’s subconscious. It known as miserliness. Miserliness paves the way for man’s nature to abandon his good morals.
Miserliness is an evil characteristic that is always associated with the breach of all moral and spiritual commitments. It subjects man to humiliation and public resentment, in addition to leading the miser to narrow mindedness. As a resulof miserliness and selfishness, the misers’ minds are centered around materialism and wealth. They are, therefore, deprived of the freedom of thought and subsequently from the facts of life and spiritual and moral values. The miser ignores the fact that wealth is a method of securing material need in life. After securing the basic necessities of life in comfort, harmony or in treating anxieties and psychological pains, there is not a role for wealth.
Fear of imaginative poverty is an illness that affects the minds of the miser. For this reason a miser person can never rid himself of worry and depression. Despite the wealth a miser may have, he is deprived of comfort and ease.

According to a British scholar:
“Some people hope for wealth as if there is nothing else worth hoping for. There are even some people who deprive themselves of knowledge and sleep because their primary goal is to acquire wealth. Individuals like this deprive themselves of the truth for they imagine wealth to be a goal and not a means.
“Wealth is like a bridge that rescues us from destruction. How wrong are those who spend their live strengthening the bridge itself while ignoring its purpose. We should not give ourselves up for the sake of money, instead we should give up money for our sake... Many people spend their whole lives searching for money and by the time they find it they need another life to spend it...but the days they long for shall never come.

There seems to be direct relationship between wealth and miserliness. Most wealthy people are misers. A survey would reveal that helping the poor is usually done by the middle-class and not the rich.
The miser rich, who fall victim to the frustration and anger of the poor, are the subject of some social corruption. The pressure which is put on the poor, and the subsequent psychological complication which befall them are factors in spreading corruption and disarray. No one denies the devastating role which this problem has in causing crimes and dissention.
There are many wealthy people who abandon the borders of humanity as a result of their intense inclination towards acquiring wealth to the point that they add to their oppression the act of depriving the poor of their rights. Such oppressors have certainly lost the human light in them. On the other hand, we have generosity, a factor of human integrity. It is a manifestation

of the originality of human feelings and a sign of stable thinking. Generosity is also the best trait among all authentic characteristics.
Generosity enjoys a very high place among all traits. Hatim Tai’s name still shines throughout the centuries because of his well-known generosity.
It is evident that generosity can only be praiseworthy, if nearness to Allah is sought in reducing the suffering of the poor as its only aim. Bragging and fame should not play a role in generosity.

A Glance at Leaders’ Views on Miserliness

Islam has stressed all aspects of human society. It recommends sacrifices and abundant giving so as to strengthen the ties of love and mercy between the rich and poor. Islam also greatly resents miserliness and immorality.
Islam deepens the roots of love in the Islamic society by implementing human feelings and the sense of cooperation between Muslims. It prohibits the rich Muslims from being indifferent to the condition of the poor, it also prohibits stinginess which prevents Muslims from paying the dues which Islam levied on them for the deprived Muslims.

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
“Islam does not resent a thing more than miserliness.
Nahj al-Fasahah p. 549

Miserliness is an evil trait which deprives the individual of happiness and tranquility and leaves him in pain. The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) also said:
“The least harmonious among people are the misers.”
Nahj al- Fasahah p.81

A Western scholar is known to have said:
“He who lacks love and seeks it (even subconsciously) always blames himself and is never satisfied with it: for this reason most of us lust the lives of others and are greatly envious of them. This feeling is not limited to the poor toward the rich: envy effects all of us for there is an element in everyone’s life that they feel weak in, for instance, a man who has a wife, children, and a good position feels greedy over those who are deprived of such things. Individuals like this consider their clothes, for example, as evidence of their superiority, or a man may see another man who is dressed better and thinks that the well dressed man is happier then he for if he wasn’t happier he would not have better clothes...”
Ravankavi

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) besought Allah to have mercy on those who do not love wealth for its self but spend their surplus (wealth) on the deprived. He said:
“May Allah have mercy on he who restrains the unnecessary word and who spends the surplus of his belongings.”

Nahj aI-Fasähah p.81

The Prophet (A.S.) also said:
“Avoid stinginess for stinginess caused those who proceeded you to perish and lead them to shed their blood and violate their sanctities.’’ Nahj al-Fasahah p.8
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“1 am amazed at the miserable misers, for they cause the poverty from which they run to come faster, and miss the wealth which they sought. In this life they live the life of the poor and will be judged in the hereafter the judgment of the rich.’’
(Ghurar al-Hikam p. 497)

A British scholar stated:
“Some people appear rich but are actually poor. They possess money but cannot even spend it on themselves. Their wealth becomes like a chain of gold tied around their neck from which they gain nothing save pain and torture. Here money becomes an affliction and wealth a disaster.”
Dar Aghushe Khush Bakhti.

Even the children of the misers complain about their fathers. This fact is clarified by Imam Ali (A.S.) who said:
“A man’s generosity makes his foes love him, and his miserliness makes his children hate him.”
Ghurar al-Hikam , p. 368

He also said:
“Greed and stinginess arc built on doubt and lack of confidence”
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 488
Dr. Farmer is known to have said:
“The traits generosity and self-confidence which arise from harmony and trusting yourself and others, when found together in an individual, perfect social manners and allow perfect enjoyment of social life. The opposite is also true for when these traits are lacking, integrity of social manners is impossible, hence, an individual is unable to enjoy a social life.” Raz Khushbakhti.
Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A.S.) explains the value of generosity by saving:
“The generous and the well-mannered are always under the protection of Allah. Allah does not abandon them but leads them to Paradise. Allah, Glory be to Him, did not send a prophet or a successor save a generous one; nor was there a righteous man who was not generous. Up to the day that he died, my Father commanded me to be generous.”
Furu al-Kafi v.4, p. 38

Once when Imam Ali (A.S.) was fighting in a battle, the man that he was fighting asked him for his sword. Imam Ali (A.S.) handed his sword to him which amazed the man. Imam All (A. S.) then stated that the miser are in urgent need of ideological guidance and if they are deprived of that guidance will remain in the trap of materialism, deprivation and misery.

GREED

On the Necessities of Life

In this life our existence is surrounded by certain necessities which hold a tight grip on us from the day that we are born. Some of these necessities such as food, clothes and shelter are basic and the preservation of life's system depends on them. Needs of this type are natural and cannot be taken care of permanently. The other type of needs are non-essential and are constantly changing and can never be totally fulfilled.
According to natural motives and the sense of need, man seeks money and struggles with all his might against all problems and difficulties which may stand in his way to make more money for to most people wealth is the beauty of life.
It is natural for the condition of men to vary in this field. For instance, if a man is surrounby poverty and weakness, he starts to seek sustenance by all means possible trying to eradicate the poverty which surrounded him. If a man has acquired wealth, he becomes inflicted with conceit and arrogance as if there was a direct relationship between wealth and the latter traits. Finally, if a man acquires wealth and security for himself, he becomes intoxicated with conceit and arrogance and evil inspirations endlessly battle his mind.
Life takes various forms depending on how every individual views it and because the reasoning ability differs from person to person. For example there are many people who have not realized the truth or reached the stage where they can distinguish between places of safety and danger. Realization of the facts of life, and reaching the state of happiness requires precision in the secrets of existence, especially the secret of "knowing one's self which can only be done in the domain of reason and logic.
Man must understand why he is in this world in order to start his search for happiness. He must choose the method with which he can advance according to his natural and spiritual needs while refraining from shortcomings that separate the soul from the realistic growth of one's personality.
Yet, success and happiness do not mean that man must constantly excel over others in exploiting material resources, for material matters are not the main goal in life and man should not violate the borders of morality and piety to make material gains.
According to Dr. Carl:
"Personal interests overtake our minds in the ideological atmosphere which liberal materialism founded. Wealth has come to be the greatest talent in our eyes and success is now measured by currency bills.
"A society which gives priority to economical affairs can never be inclined to morality which requires complete obedience to the laws of life. An individual who excludes all affairs but the economical ones from his day-to-day struggle cannot adhere to the natural laws of life. Morality. undoubtedly, leads us to the truth and organizes all our physical and psychological activities in accordance to the human system. Moral excellence may be compared to strong engines which function properly. Dissention in a society is not but a consequence of

immorality”

The authentic aim of life is to achieve spirituality. Spirituality is the most important and valuable matter which man can achieve. He who keeps his soul confined to spiritual treasures seldom needs this world, for he gains spiritual satisfaction in the shadow of spirituality which accompanies him for the rest of his life. Such an individual would not exchange his spiritual wealth for material gains under any conditions.

A Greedy Person is Never Satisfied

Coveting the belongings of others is a psychological state that forces the individual to pursue materialism in a matter that makes material gains an axis on which the mind rotates.
Material inclination arises from uncontrollable greed. Because of the imaginary happiness that it creates, greed is considered a factor which brings misery into the lives of men. As a result man disregards everything and sacrifices all moral traits in his quest towards gathering wealth until finally the feelings of want become rooted deep in his soul.
Dr. Shaupenhaur said:
“lt is rather difficult to define the inclinations which are related to acquiring wealth because individual’s satisfaction varies greatly and there is not a defined scale by which people’s wants can be judged. Some people are satisfied with small amounts of money that meet their necessities while others com-plain about their unhappiness despite their abundant wealth (which vastly surpasses their needs). Therefore, everyone has certain limits to his wants by which he fulfills his hopes. Yet, when man experiences difficulties on this path he complains and may give up.
“The vast wealth of the rich does not deceive the poor. Wealth is like salt water the more you drink the thirstier you become.”
Indeed, the greedy will never be satisfied with all the sustenance of the world just as fire burns all the fuel that it is given!!
When greediness rules a nation, it transforms its social life into a field of disputes and dissention in the place of justice, security and stability. Naturally, in such a society moral excellence and spirituality do not stand a chance.
It should be noted, however, that there is a great difference between money worship and the desire for advancement, including that of material features. Hence, it is important to draw a line between these two aspects for there is no righteous justification preventing human societies from seeking advancement and excellence in the shadows of nature and talents.
The endeavor of the greedy creates a chain of miseries for his society, for he intends to acquire his lusts with unjust methods including methods which may bring poverty to others.
One who covets seizes the sources of wealth in order to acquire more for himself and consequently creating acute economical problems.
Some people claim that wealth is a source that fulfills many desires, so they give it their greatest attention. In fact, it is the poor who have excelled in the most honorable and greatest fields in history. Writers, inventors and scientists were mainly from the poor class.
Furthermore, vast wealth is destructive to many people. For example, when youth inherit

large sums of money they generally disregard all avenues of education and knowledge drowning themselves in sin and lusts because they feel no need for work or development. Once a wealthy man visited a famous Greek philosopher. The latter did not trust the wealthy man so he did not make any special arrangements for his visit. The philosopher said to the wealthy man:
“Surely you have not come to learn from me but to put me down for my financial situation, am I not right?

The wealthy man replied:
“Had I followed your path in acquiring knowledge 1 would not have had wealth, a palace, servants, etc.”

At this the philosopher said:
“Regardless of Your material belongings, I am richer than you. I do not need servants to protect me, for I fear no-one including Caesar. Because you are dependent on others you will always be poor. I possess reason, satisfaction and the freedom to think instead of gold and silver, while you waste your time thinking about silver plates.
“My ideas are my vast empire where I live happily, while you spend your lifetime in anxiety and unrest. All that which you possess is worthless to me, but what I possess is abundant for you will never fulfill all your hopes and wants, hut my needs are always fulfilled by using my reason.

Surely everyone should rely on knowledge and not on gold and silver; for only the ignorant rely on them.
Felicity and dissatisfaction undoubtedly are a part of everyone’s life; each having its place in the events of life. Everyone who enters this world shall experience a portion of both regardless of his material condition. Here we can safely say that wealth, which exceeds one’s needs is useless in finding happiness. According to Socrates many individuals do not possess money, gems, fancy garments, or palaces, yet their lives are a thousand times happier than the lives of the wealthy.
Surely the greedy is a humiliated, poor slave to the world and its money. He has surrendered his neck to the chains of wealth and has submitted to immature thoughts. The greedy imagines that his wealth, which is enough for generations of his descendants, is not but a reserve for his gloomy days. Only when the bells of danger and death ring does a greedy man realizes his mistakes. When the bell rings to announce the final seconds of his life, he looks at his wealth, for which he has wasted all his life, with sorrow and disappointment knowing that it is useless to him in his grave-the grave to which he carries sorrows for the many errors he has committed throughout his life.

Fair Distribution in Islam

Along with its call upon people to struggle and advance Islam included a strong warning against fanatical adherence to materialism. Islam declares that such adherence deprives man from seeking the real goal of lif, the eternal happiness. Imam Baqir (A.S.) gave the following description of the greedy man:
“An example of the greedy man of this world is that of the silkworm. The more silk that it spins around itself, the less of a chance it has to survive until it finally suffocates itself.”
Usul al-Fasahah

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
“Refrain from greed for those who were before you perished as a result of greed. Greed commanded them to be stingy and they obeyed: it ordered them into alienation and they obeyed; and it commanded them to sin and they sinned.”
Nahj l-Fasahah p. 199

Imam Ali (A.S.) pointed out the misery which results from coveting when he said:
“Avoid greed for its champion is the captor of humiliation and exhaustion,”
Ghurar al-Hikam ; p. 135

Dr. Mardin said:
“Wealth is not everything in man’s life, nor does his real happiness lie in collecting money. Nevertheless, many young people make the mistake of believing that money is the most important matter in life. They, therefore, waste the primes of their life seeking wealth while depriving themselves of everything else. This is a very mistaken way of thinking and it is one of the reasons behind many people’s miseries.
“We struggle to acquire grand clothes, etc thinking that they are the ways to happiness: while in fact they only bring -disappointment and deprivation to us’’. Khishtan Sazi
Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“A greedy person is a captor of humiliation, whose captivity does not cease.
(Ghurar aI-Hikam p. 50

The righteous religion of Islam, which conforms to mans nature, equally distributes between materialism and spirituality. It has, therefore, chosen a path for its followers that guarantees healthy spirits and bodies. Religious individuals possess wise and righteous spirits for they understand divine facts.
Satisfaction is a unceasing treasure, for its possessors endeavor to acquire only what they have a need for. Those with reason organize their lives and avoid polluting their spiritual happiness with mistaken attempts to collect wealth and lowliness. An individual who is satisfied is happy with what he ethically acquires. This sufficient method allows him to reach the real goal of life (moral excellence); in this matter he achieves real wealth (that is satisfaction) which brings him harmony and does not need to ask for that which is in the hands of others. Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
“It is best to submit and adhere to satisfaction and piety, and to relieve one’s self from covetousness and greed; for greed and covetousness are present poverty and submission and

satisfaction are apparent wealth."
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 255

He also pointed out the spiritual and psychological disorders which affect the covetous when he said:
"One who covets brings illness."
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 544

Dr. Mardin said:
"Certain thoughts which arise from greed, covetousness, and all other psychological reactions not only adversely affect the body but also the soul. They, therefore, deprive us of a good living and change the path of harmonious living. Greed and covetousness destroy all natural human traits in us.
Pirozi Fikr

Imam Ali (A.S.) is quoted as saying:
"Greed pollutes the soul. corrupts religion and destroys youthfulness."
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 77.

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) explained the afflictions and calamities which arise from greediness. He said:
"A greedy person faces seven acute problems:

I) Worrying, which harms his body and is disadvantageous to him;
2)Depression, which is endless;
3) Exhaustion, from which death is the only relief-and with that relief the greed shall be more exhausted;
4) Fear, which uselessly disturbs his life;
5) Sadness, which uselessly disturbs his life;
6) Judgment, which does not save him from Allah's torture unless Allah forgives him.
7) Punishment, from which there is no escape or avoidance."
Mustadrak al- Wasã'iI v.2, p. 435

Greediness: is surely an evil desire which leads man to humiliation and sin. Imam Ali (A.S.) said:
"greed is a motive for evil."
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 16

He (A.S.) also said:
"The fruit of covetousness is complaining about shortcomings."
Ghurar al-Hikam p. 360

Dr. S.M. Caughaust said:
"Stealing stems from greed. Thieves steal that which they do not own because they covet it.

He who steals a pair of socks from a merchant, or a bicycle entrusted to him, only does so because of the influence of covetousness to possess things. Thus, the thieves motive for stealing is covetousness."
Chi Midanam

Here we conclude that greed - this dangerous spiritual disorder-can be treated by believing in Allah and the Last Day. Satisfaction can only be achieved by strengthening one's spirituality and developing moral excellence.

17

DISPUTING

Radical Self-Love

Coveting material things is a basic human nature. It is an instinct that was implemented in man on the day he was born. It is the motive which allows him to struggle continuously and preserve himself. As a result of this instinct, we notice that man avoids that which harms him and is attracted by advantageous matters. Therefore, he is a hostage of the psychological phenomenon when he advances. This phenomenon plays a great role in advancing the level of human civilization.
Yet, human happiness can only be achieved if men when struggling towards it, protect themselves from immoderation and carelessness; and at the same time refrain from the slavery of wants. Thereupon, in order for one to fulfill the needs of his instincts in an appropriate manner, wherein praiseworthy traits and excellent morals can develop, he must use his reason in every field of life. This is because reason guides man not his instincts. Reason is what prevents instincts from both excessiveness and under development. It is the element which makes us face the realities of truth and falsehood. The power of reason, which has the greatest duty in developing man's personality, is what possess the ability to protect us from going astray and grants us scrutiny in our affairs.
If the instinct of self-love violates the limits of moderation and ventures into the territory of extravagance, it adversely affects man's reasoning system; hence preventing him from realizing the realities of life. Those who fall victim to such a disorder will eventually drown in the swamp of misguidance and corruption. Yet, the said instinct can be criticized for its harmfulness only when it is within the boundaries of extravagance. Therefore, the only goal of criticizing self-love is to point out the disadvantages of allowing this instinct to violate the limits of reason.
Both the success and failure of an individual correlate to their spiritual and moral condition.

Moral disorders, which are spread through various stages of life, often stem from problems that arise form our unruly and unjustifiable wants.
Man has been given abundant talents and capabilities. Everyone has the power to follow his authentic and reasonable affection. Nevertheless, it is apparent that nothing is more of a harder for man than to adjust his instincts or wants including self-love conceit and arrogance. Therefore, we are compelled to make more of an effort to adjust this instinct or we will be unable to adopt excellent manners. Without self-control, we cannot lead an acceptable and praiseworthy life.

What Do We Achieve from Arguments

Success in social behavior directly relates to certain rules which we must learn and build our conduct upon. For man's role in his relationships with others and his knowledge of the limits of his duties are among the issues which are determinative to his/her misery or happiness.
The need for harmony and establishing relationships is a trait deeply implemented in man's nature. Everyone is inclined to love and harmony; hence resents loneliness and secluded ness. However, unless a person reaches peace of mind and soul, he will be incapable of living in peace with others, or with himself.
Peace, harmony and cooperation are essential factors for a healthy and peaceful social life; and respecting other's rights and feelings is the first conditionto be observed in the art on constructive interaction. In this case, interpersonal relationships enjoy strength and continuity. Those who lack the foresaid traits are naturally deprived of balanced relationships with others, and the basis of love and harmony are weakened in them. They cannot, under the circumstances, keep their relationships with others at an acceptable level.
One of the evil traits which severely hurts the feelings of others and destroys the ties of love between people is disputing with them. Arguing individuals should realize that excessive self-love is one of the main factors which create this evil trait; it grows only when irrigated by the flow of this treacherous instinct.
A disputatious person, in order to quench the thirst of his conceit, opposes every opinion that may be brought up in any gathering, not to present a righteous idea or eradicate a mistaken concept, but to destroy his opponent's personality by false accusations. He attempts to create a sense of false excellence for himself by doing so. Such a person might conceal his aims under exclamatory or wondering vocabulary. In this manner, the disputatious looses the spirit of a just judge, and dares to commit all kinds of oppression and encroachments upon other's rights.
Furthermore, the opponent's reaction, in this case, should not be disregarded for when an individual's pride is violated, it is inevitable that he reacts to the cause. Therefore, he may exploit the appropriate opportunity to revenge, using all his powers to do so. Thus, if this trait is widespread in any given nation, it can result in disunity in both the way of thinking and the manner of conduct.
A scholar commented on this subject by saying:

“Reason is a shinning light that guides mankind away from the darkness of ignorance and relieves him from his problems. We boast about the fact that we are the only creatures to possess reason saying that with reason we have come to understand matters, their causes, results, and their relations to other entities. Yet, woe unto us if we attempt to unveil the truth by means of discussion and argumentations; for disputing results is nothing save mental anxiety. Disputing also reveals the ignorance of the disputants and their errors in scientific fields; it never changes the way others think nor makes them adopt our ideologies.

A Glance at the Words of Leaders

Islam has closely considered all aspects of social life, and scrutinized every element of love and harmony, hence it strongly condemns all that creates dissention among Muslims and shakes the foundation of their unity. The leaders of religion have shown their followers how to follow the path of purity and protect their hearts from the filth of all obscurities.

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
“It is a virtue that a man hastens to his brother when the latter speaks to him”.
Nahj al-Fasahah p. 633

Imam Baqir (A.S.) said:
And learn good listening just as you learn good speech; and do not interrupt another’s words.”

The leaders of religion have repeatedly criticized disputation, and reminded people of its evil results up to the point that they prohibited their followers from disputations even in righteous issues.
Imam Sadiq (A.S.) said:
“A worshipper does not reach the essence of belief until he abandons boasting even when right.”
Safinah al-Bihar V.2, p. 522

No one becomes victorious in the arena of disputation. Imam Hadi (A.S.) gave the following advice to those who advocate defeating their opponents by means of disputation:
“Boasting ruins long-standing relationships; ends strong relations, and the least of its evils is competition (trying to excel over one s foes), and competition is the main (factor in) alienation.”

Dr. Dale Carnegie wrote:
“In every ten verbal disputes, the disputant comes out in nine out of ten cases believing more in their opinions and claiming that their opponents are wrong. There is not a winner in these disputes where the one defeated runs away. Yes, you crack your fingers in happiness over your victory; but you think about the condition of your opponent! You made him feel ignorant and hurt his feelings leaving a scar on his heart.
‘“Disputing is an inappropriate way to convince others, and to influence the way that other’s think. In fact, there is no relationship between convincing and disputing, nor can misunderstandings be removed by disputing. Selected advice and a peaceful approach are the

elements needed in this case. It is incumbent on man to sympathize with his opponent.”

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:
“Avoid bragging for the lack of its goodness; and avoid bragging for its advantages are few and it instigates enmity between brothers.”

A famous doctor once said:
“There are not many advantages to disputing. The intention for the disputant can turn on the side of his foe, for feelings can erupt during arguments. No matter how calm conversations are, they still have adverse affects on the opponent’s heart. Thus, whenever we attempt to outsmart him he insists on his opinion. One word can destroy a love relationship forever. Furthermore, disputes never cause others to adopt our way of thinking.”
DarJostojui Kushbakhti

Disputants always have a sense of anxiety in their hearts.
Imam Sadiq (A.S.) said:
“Avoid disputing for it occupies the heart, results in hypocrisy, and creates hard feelings.”
Usule Kafi. p. 452

Therefore, by observing the divine Islamic teachings we can pave the way for ourselves to create a spiritual revolution in our spiritual characteristics in an attempt achieve excellent human morals. Allah is the Best Helper and on Him do we depend.

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